

# The Freeman

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## CURRENT COMMENT.

ACCORDING to news-dispatches of 29 August, Secretary Hoover has announced that controversial questions will be excluded from the forthcoming conference on unemployment. Some instinct warned us, somehow, that this would be the case, as our readers may remember. Then, too, we observe that Secretary Hughes, out of a laudable desire to avert possible disappointment, has served notice on the public, all and several, that the conference on disarmament won't be exactly a conference on disarmament, y' understand, but only a conference on the limitation of armament, which according to all precedent, is something else again. This is rough on our liberal friends and on the peace-societies and the sentimental pacifists; and if they will accept condolences from seasoned old sinners like ourselves, we freely offer them.

ALL sorts and conditions of men are handing Ireland advice gratis, so we may as well take our turn. Some exhort them to show themselves good politicians, and to do so-and-so. Others implore them to show themselves pure idealists, and to do so-and-so. We humbly suggest to Mr. de Valera and his associates that they show themselves great humorists, Gargantuan, unimaginably-magnificent humorists, and that in pursuance of this aim, they act as follows: Let them accept the British proposals (which guarantee them fiscal freedom), meekly and without a word; let them agree to stay in the Empire and make no objection to political separation from Ulster, and make no fuss about the two parliaments. Then let them declare absolute freedom of trade with all the world—make as clean and wholesome a sweep of custom-houses as St. Patrick did of snakes—take every penny of taxation off labour and the products of labour, and raise all their revenue from a tax on the land-values of Ireland at twenty shillings in the pound, landlord's valuation. Then let them take a large drink of poteen all round, sit back calmly and see what would happen to the hated Sassenach and his United Kingdom!

BRITISH by-elections often have a way of indicating something more than the drift of political opinion. Take the recent Caerphilly by-election for instance. Caerphilly lies at the heart of South Wales's intransigence and a victory for Mr. Lloyd George's candidate in these un-

regenerate days could hardly be looked for. Nevertheless, there is an element of surprise in the news that 13,699 electors should have seen no reason to object to Mr. Morgan Jones, the Labour candidate, because he was kept in prison as an out-and-out conscientious objector during the war. Furthermore, another 2592 electors in that rebellious constituency were ready to give their support to the candidate of the Communist party, who has just come out of prison, where he had been serving a two months' sentence for sedition. If the British electorate goes on in this style, they will make something interesting out of their House of Commons. We can imagine no better training for a legislator than to have suffered in prison for having a sturdy conscientious objection to some form of tyranny.

ECONOMISTS like Mr. Maynard Keynes who know more about such things than we do, are now saying that Germany's economic advantages are not permanent and that the fear of them is exaggerated. Well, possibly. Still, even though they may not last for ever, they seem to do a lot of damage while they last. The president of the American Club in Antwerp reports, for example, that German competition in the iron and steel industry has closed up forty-one of the fifty-four Belgian furnaces. This is going pretty strong for a starter, even if Germany's economic advantage be not permanent. As business is organized, it has to be fed with fair regularity and at short intervals in order to succeed. In this respect it is like an individual. If men could eat for six months and fast for six months, economic pressure would not trouble them much; but they can not do this, and neither can business.

BROTHER FRANK MUNSEY also bears his testimony to the Hun menace, with a resonant yoop in the editorial page of the New York *Herald*. He cites the case of a New York exporter who could not afford to put American products into Porto Rico, even with the tariff in his favour; so he bought German goods and shipped them to Porto Rico from Hamburg. Another exporter could compete with the Germans on the price of certain goods for shipment to Cuba, but the freight-rates were so much lower from Hamburg than from New York that the wily Germans got him also on the hip, and he bought in Germany. A New York broker, furthermore, discovered that he could buy newsprint-paper in Germany and deliver it in Portland, Oregon, cheaper than he could buy it here and ship it from the Atlantic seaboard; so again, Germany got the business. "The German indemnity is being paid," says the *Herald*, "but on such a basis, how long can we stand it?" Notwithstanding that this paper anticipated its contemporaries considerably in raising this very question, we are still unable to answer it.

THE Paris *Matin* of 24 August makes a three-column front-page spread of a personal letter from Lenin to a friend. The letter purports to be lifted from a Russian publication, and is illustrated, regardless of expense, with an extraordinary profile of Lenin, which makes him look a sort of cross between one of Paul Bourget's best assorted *boulevardiers* and Don Caesar de Bazan. The letter may be genuine, but our candid opinion is that the sketch would hardly pass muster. The letter is an elaborate recantation and confession. Lenin acknowl-



edges a grave error in having attached so much importance to the idea of social classes. He admits that he was wrong. He now feels that the forces of partisanship are weakening day by day, and says he has for a long time been aware of the imminence of compromise. As for himself, he is tired; he wants to get away where it is quiet, and rest, and read his long-neglected books; and so forth and so on. A friend writes us from Paris that "this letter seems to me to bear little resemblance to any writing of Lenin's that I have ever seen." When we read the letter, and especially when we contemplate that very strange portrait, we too are constrained to admit that Lenin must have changed something awful in the last few months.

SOMEHOW we can not lose sleep over these wonderful stories of Russia's various and sundry capitulations. They may turn out according to specifications, and then again they may not. We do not worry about the re-establishment of private ownership or private operation of Russian industry; nor do we care two pins about concessions or about the rise or fall of this or that Government. We have made ourselves abundantly clear on these points, again and again. We can not fret about how tired Lenin gets; we get tired ourselves, sometimes, and we know just how it goes. We saw an excellent piece in the *Manchester Guardian* the other day, however, which touched casually upon the one point and the only one, that interests us. The article quotes Krassin as saying, "We shall remain lords of our earth; we shall never grant monopolies." As long as the Russians stick to that, we firmly decline to worry about their fate.

MR. SAMUEL UNTERMYER has just returned from Austria, and has published in the newspapers a very moving account of that stricken country's plight. He speaks in particular of the sad condition of Vienna. Curiously, the next thing that met our eye after reading this was the picture in the current issue of the *Musical Courier*, of the magnificent statue just put up in Vienna to the memory of Johann Strauss. The practical and utilitarian spirit may inquire, as it did on another occasion, why this statue might not be sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor. After a re-perusal of Luke XII, 1-7, however, this paper finds courage to view the circumstances otherwise. We prefer to regard this action of the Viennese as a striking bit of evidence that spiritual affairs are the only ones that matter greatly, and that material affairs are best regarded as ancillary to them.

THE report of the purchase, by an American syndicate, of the estates of Archduke Frederick of Austria will serve the cause of common sense here and abroad, if it sets a few people to meditating upon the nature of the privileges transferred. We take it for granted that the Archduke kept his title of nobility; but as far as we can see, it makes very little difference whether he did or not. The Archduke virtually ceased to exist at the moment when the sale of the estates was consummated; but the tenants on his lands and the workers in his mines and his factories are not much better off, for all that. Indeed they may properly celebrate the coming of the Americans by shouting, in the good old-fashioned way, "The Duke is dead!—long live the Duke!" In this instance, there has been no intervening revolution to obscure the fact that the substitution of one sort of monopoly for another is a change in form only, and not in substance. The people have not guillotined their duke; they have not even passed a law abolishing the feudal system, and thereby cleared the ground for the coming of a new set of proprietors. The whole revolution was managed very quietly by a handful of lawyers in a room at the Ritz Hotel at Paris, and now that it is over, it is just barely conceivable that the people will refuse to believe that there has been any revolution at all.

ACCORDING to a recent Paris dispatch, important American railway-interests "are considering the idea of undertaking to put European transportation on a working basis." European transportation, the dispatch says, is in a bad way; partly because very little has been done in the way of replacing rolling-stock during the past seven years, partly because of exchange-conditions in European countries, and very largely because of the additional customs-barriers resulting from the peace-settlements. This lack of transportation is said to be the primary hindrance to the re-establishment of normal economic conditions in Europe. There is much truth in all this, no doubt, but we can not help feeling that before inviting American railway-interests to grapple with the situation, European business-interests would do well to make a careful investigation of American railway-conditions and railway-history. It is a bad thing, certainly, not to be able to move any freight; but probably it does not greatly matter whether the cause of this disability is in customs-barriers or in artificially-boosted freight-rates which are higher than the traffic will bear. American railway-operators, with the eager help of the Government, are rapidly bringing American transportation to a state identical with that in which seven years of war and peace have left European transportation. We would suggest that Europe begin the revival of its railway-industry by abolishing its customs-barriers, and leave the doubtful expedient of American assistance as a last hope, faint and very forlorn.

It interests this paper to note in dispatches like the foregoing, indications of a growing disbelief in the ancient superstition that politicians may be trusted to regulate the affairs of peoples. In this dispatch, for instance, one finds expressions like "the lack of transportation and the hobbling by political considerations of such facilities as still exist. . . . There have been various conferences on the subject . . . but at these conferences statesmen, and not business- and railway-men, have dealt with the situation, with the result that resolutions of destructive criticism were passed, but transportation remained about as bad as ever. . . . Each country acts independently in its customs-administration, and delays and inconveniences to foreign shippers seem to be about the last thing in the world to be worried about." These quotations imply an awareness of the fact that the politician's primary interest is in politics, i. e., in the selfish interests which he represents, and that he will further that interest, if need be, at the expense of economic distress for a whole continent. It is a logical step, and a short one, from such distrust of politics to the desire to get free of its hampering restrictions; and it is a good omen that such indications appear of late with increasing frequency.

DOWN in Panama, the people may not go into mourning for the loss of their province of Coto without incurring the displeasure of the United States of America. With or without authority from Washington, the Governor of the Canal Zone has informed these people that any public exhibition of sorrow at the decision enforced upon them by Mr. Hughes will be regarded as "anti-American propaganda." Fortunately, however, the right of free lamentation has not yet been abridged in the continental United States, and one is therefore at liberty to propose that we shall celebrate in this country the rites forbidden in Panama. At first glance, this suggestion may be deemed facetious, not to say flippant; but indeed it is far from being so. Panama has been parted from a few square miles of jungle, but we have lost far more than that. Indeed we are quite convinced that imperialism abroad is inevitably accompanied by Toryism at home, and we are more ready to weep for our lost liberties than are the Panamans for the coasts of Coto.

THE other day the police of Newark, New Jersey, made a slight abridgement of the right of free speech. If the police of Newark have not done this many times before,



they are an exception to the general rule; and certainly this particular instance would not be worthy of remark if it had not contributed to the redefinition of the rights and duties of the American Negro. Mr. Jack Johnson, the Negro pugilist, had been scheduled to address the coloured people of Newark; and the guardians of law, order and constitutional rights chose to forbid him to speak because a previous speech of his had resulted in some sort of activity against the Ku Klux Klan. If we are not mistaken, this same Mr. Johnson was lately in trouble with the Government in the matter of the draft. This very fact may be regarded in some quarters as a sufficient reason for refusing to allow him to get up and say, as he did say recently, that the time would soon come when the Negroes as a race would be able to cope with the whites. However, we are interested simply in making the point that the duties of the citizen, or what are now called his duties, are exacted of the Negro in full measure, while the corresponding rights, or what used to be considered rights, are withheld consistently, systematically, and with no proper sense of moderation.

NOTHING ever gave us more pleasure than to record the fact reported from Charleston, West Virginia, that when a meeting of the American Legion was called for the organization of a fight against union miners, the members refused to serve. The meeting broke up with jeers for a speaker who was urging the project, and for the Sheriff of Logan County who was leading the forces of West Virginian law and order against the miners. Doing the dirty work of natural-resource monopolists is a pretty low business, and we are heartily glad to see that the local American Legion is not built for it.

WE have not been privileged to view the private plans of the Knights of Columbus for the revision of American history, but we have heard several things about the project which lead us to suspect that those engaged upon it are departing somewhat from one of the greatest traditions of the Roman Catholic Church—the tradition of internationalism. We may be wrong, but we feel that the Knight's History Commission is overmuch moved by an indiscriminate anti-British sentiment. If we mistake not, it is this sentiment that has led the Chairman of the Commission to set a very low estimate upon the part that English tradition has played in the creation of such liberties as have been enjoyed upon this continent. Indeed we feel obliged to take issue with some of the things that Mr. McSweeney has been saying about Magna Charta. Mr. McSweeney is perhaps less than half right when he says that "American liberty did not derive from Magna Charta," and he is certainly at least two-thirds wrong when he opposes the celebration of a "Magna Charta Day," on the ground that such a celebration in this country would "necessarily eclipse our own Independence Day." The development of human liberty is a wholly international affair. If the celebration of libertarian anniversaries tends to stimulate resistance to all authority, spiritual as well as temporal, our Catholics may well insist that these dates shall be forgotten; but it is hard to see why any good Catholic should find Magna Charta Day more objectionable than the Fourth of July.

It is plainly the patriotic duty of those who are responsive to that sort of thing to call the attention of the Prohibition enforcement officers to the flagrant breach of the law which is going on under their very noses, so to speak. Day after day, in the columns of the London Times, a large advertisement is appearing announcing the fact that the good ships "America" and "George Washington," belonging to the United States Mail Line, are now running between New York and London, and then follows, in what Mr. Harding as an old printer, would call "display type," the startling announcement: "Choice Wines, Spirits and Liqueurs." Now, is this fair, Mr. Volstead, is this fair?

WE hear with delight that American classical scholars are about to take up the monumental project of the "Thesaurus Linguae Latinae" and internationalize it. This is a most creditable enterprise. The Thesaurus is intended to cover the whole field of Latin literature; it was planned by a joint commission representing five German and Austrian universities, and the work has already proceeded as far as the letter C. Since the war, the original commission has been unable to find funds for the work, and what assistance may be had from this country will come only in the nick of time, for the project must be abandoned this autumn if support for it can not be found. What a revelation it would be of the general concern, or lack of concern, with things of the spirit, if the very moderate, nay, the utterly insignificant amount of money needed to carry on this important, distinguished and truly beneficent enterprise were not forthcoming! Fortunately, according to the reports that have reached us, our classical scholars have no notion of standing by and seeing the thing fail; and this, in a land which puts so heavy a discount on classical scholarship, shows most commendable insight and determination.

As excellent an idea as we have heard of lately comes from Sir Henry Hadow in an address at the Royal College of Music. It is that we should all study music in the same way and in the same spirit and from the same point of view as we study literature. Music appeals to the whole of the spiritual nature of man, as literature does. "What would you know of Shakespeare," Sir Henry asked, "if you had no means of making his acquaintance except at the theatre? How do you suppose you are going to know anything of Bach and Beethoven by hearing the 'B-minor Mass' and the 'Eroica' once a year? We make the acquaintance of the poets by taking them with us into our arm-chair and reading them over and over again. Why don't we do the same with Beethoven?" Sir Henry said that we can do more to make music familiar to us by reading it as we read the plays of Shakespeare and the novels of Dickens than by any other means now practicable; and he added that no one really understands music who appreciates it only through the ear. Our own amateur's experience leads us to back up this doctrine most enthusiastically and to endorse without reservation the practice that Sir Henry recommends. We believe that our readers will find that a very brief devotion to the exercise of reading music just as one would read literature will bring them all the good results that Sir Henry affirms of it.

TRULY the high cost of living is no respecter of persons, for here is King George himself complaining that his beggarly income of £470,000 a year, to say nothing of a few odd thousands from other sources, is not enough in these expensive days to keep body and soul together. This makes it look as though the present would not be a very tactful time for our Mr. Harvey to say anything to the British Government about that little loan. . . . Well, it's a hard world, as those four men (three of them over sixty years of age) must have felt who, in the course of a single day recently, were found ill and starving in the streets of London.

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## TOPICS OF THE DAY.

### IN CONTEMPT OF COURT.

THE American Bar Association would greatly increase its wisdom, if not its learning—and wisdom is better than learning—if it would leave off its regular pursuits for a while and devote itself to a diligent reading of Hans Christian Andersen. That delightful author, like Homer, is always in season, always has something to feed the best reason and spirit of the race. For instance, he tells the story of a king who was taken in by some wandering impostor's proposal to make him a magic garment that should be invisible to himself, but very magnificent and gorgeous for others to behold. The garment was finally done, the impostor went through the motions of putting it on the King, and the King started out on dress-parade before his subjects. Every one praised the garment and said how wonderful it was, and the King was proud and pleased, and everything went on swimmingly, until suddenly a little child in the crowd piped up with the cry, "But he has nothing on!" This was all that was needed to stir the crowd out of its superstitious credulity. One after another began to say, "But he has nothing on!" and that was the inglorious end of the whole performance, the end of the impostor and the end of the people's confidence in the King.

If this excellent fairy-tale had been read before the Bar Association's recent annual meeting in Cincinnati, when that learned body was considering the topic of our national disrespect for law, it might have mercifully saved the Attorney-General and Mr. James M. Beck from a display of oratorical antics quite comparable with the silly excursion of the King. These gentlemen deplored our national characteristic disrespect for law; they forecasted a dismal future for the country, unless our turn for lawlessness be somehow checked. But at this point, their humour, common sense, and imaginative power failed them, and they did not recommend, by way of sanative, the most obvious device of trying to make the law respectable.

It is quite true, as the Attorney-General and Mr. Beck say, that there is great disrespect for law. Nearly every issue of any newspaper brings to the eye a fresh and striking evidence of it. In Knoxville, Tennessee, the other day, a woman accused of murder was lionized by the populace. About the same time, a fugitive bank-president, accused of embezzling the bank's funds, got a tremendous ovation on his return to his home in Nebraska. Incidents like these are so frequent that their implications escape notice. Still, when one considers the number of laws, the extraordinary and fantastic character of most of them, the gross impertinence implied in the subject-matter of most of them, the barefaced and outrageous character of class-legislation which so many of them bear, it is remarkable that American citizens are as law-abiding as they are. The failure to perceive this aspect of the situation seems to us to disqualify the Bar Association, and especially to disqualify Mr. Daugherty and Mr. Beck, for forming a respectable judgment in the premises. They are not competent to say what should be done, because they do not appear to have the faintest notion of what the trouble is.

Reason and common sense are above the law; or rather, they are the law; and mere statutory law, which is what these gentlemen have in mind when they talk about law, must meet the terms of reason and common sense; otherwise, it must take the penalty of disrespect and, whenever possible, of infraction. Our statutory laws, for the most part, do not do this; and

our legislators do not see, apparently, that therefore they themselves are at fault for the popular contempt of law. Statutory law was perhaps best defined by the celebrated mayor of Toledo, Ohio, called Golden Rule Jones, as "anything that the people will back up"; and the people will not act for long in contravention of their collective common sense. They see the law as a pliant instrument of economic exploitation in behalf of privileged interests, as an unwarranted and impertinent interference with natural rights; they see it as an artifice to promote injustice at the expense of natural justice, and to restrain and nag at natural instincts and impulses which are by rights wholly outside its purview. The other day, for example, a Federal judge in a Southern district (Judge Boyd of North Carolina) decided that the Federal child-labour law is unconstitutional because it interferes with State sovereignty. Well, it simply can not be expected that persons of ordinary common sense will read that decision and not remark to themselves how mighty queer it is that State sovereignty goes up or goes down according as a privileged interest or a bit of purely political opportunism—prohibition, for example—happens, one way or the other, to be at stake. No one can read of the stupendous dishonesty of the Shipping Board transactions (as exhibited to the Senate, for instance, and reported in the *Congressional Record* of 22 August, page 5839 and following) without coming into a healthy-minded contempt for the whole kit and boiling of our statutory law. Let the reader try, and see whether he can do it; a copy of the *Record* is to be had, probably, in any public library, and the record of these transactions is worth any one's perusal.

It is the Bar Association, it is Mr. Daugherty and Mr. Beck, and not the public, who seem utterly taken in by the notion of the sacro-sanct character of the law; and for this reason we urge upon them a long and diligent reading of Hans Christian Andersen, in order that their insight, if they ever had any, into the workings of human nature may be restored. The public sees not only how statutory laws are made, by what sort of people and for what primary purposes they are made, but it also sees the ethics of the practice of law. In this very matter of the Shipping Board, for example, it sees on page 5844 of the *Record* that the law-firm of Messrs. Wilson and Colby is representing claims against the Government; that, as Senator McCormick said:

We have in prospect a formidable array of legal talent at the service of those who have claims against the Government of the United States. The Attorney-General's office and the State Department are well represented. We have Wilson and Colby, Lansing and Wolsey, Gregory and Todd, Palmer and Davis. . . offering not only their talent as lawyers, but their experience as public servants in pressing claims against the Government of the United States.

Mr. Daugherty and Mr. Beck may possibly find no difficulty in stomaching that sort of thing, especially as their own turn will come at the expiration of their term of public service. But the public, surely, may not be overmuch blamed if the questions of taste and ethics presented here are a little subversive of its general respect for law. As a person of ordinarily decent sensibilities looks at it, he concludes that the picture which Rabelais draws of Grippeminaud and the furred law-cats, snarling and clawing at one another over pieces of gold, is not overdone, and that it is substantially re-presented wherever law is practised.

No, the only way to rehabilitate a popular respect for law is by making law respectable. We feel particularly free in giving this hint, because we are quite sure



it will not be taken, and we do not wish it to be taken. We think it would be better all round if matters continue as they are going. If the law were regenerated and born anew into respectability, there would be little room for the activities of Mr. Daugherty and Mr. Beck, and indeed the whole Bar Association might find its occupational avenues seriously straitened; so, no doubt, these gentlemen will have nothing to say to our suggestion. We think that we are safe, therefore, in telling the truth unadorned, and in calling attention to the rough and general justice upon which the popular estimate of law, as of most other things, is based. People have contempt for the law because they feel it to be contemptible; and examination shows that their instinct is abundantly justified. The law is at present probably the most sordid, disreputable and depraving institution in the country; and the instinct which now feels it to be so, will in time—a short time, if it keeps on strengthening at its present rate—become transformed into the reason which knows it to be so; and thus it is that Mr. Daugherty and Mr. Beck, the Bar Association and the courts, are really, in spite of appearances, among our sovereign educators.

### RACE, AND THE RIGHTS OF MAN.

IN the course of recent meanderings through the highways and by-ways of Negro journalism, we have chanced upon a number of advertisements which are deserving of reproduction in some source-book of materials on the race-problem. We have discovered—and some of our readers will no doubt be surprised to discover with us—that the Negroes of the country are being invited, on the one hand, to make use of preparations which will whiten their skins and straighten their hair, and on the other, to purchase phonographic records of the “Universal Ethiopian Anthem”; to wear rosettes of the official All-African colours—red, black and green; and to read books which prove that Jesus Christ was a Negro, and that a black man will some day be the “Universal King.”

One of these groups of advertisements plays upon the Negro's racial humility; the other calls out his racial pride. The opposition between the two appeals is fundamental, but no more so than that between the two main currents that give direction to the life of the black man in America—the current of assimilation, and the current of race-patriotism. The people of this country are already familiar with the attempts of the Negro to re-make himself in the image of the white man, but it will perhaps be some little time before our Caucasian citizens realize that their opposition to these attempts at assimilation is forcing an increasing number of Negroes to adopt a contrary course, and to set up a racial pride of their own in opposition to the prejudice of the whites.

In this connexion, attention may be invited to certain recent events which serve, like the advertisement already cited, to give some notion of the turn affairs are taking. During the month of August, an “International Convention of Negroes” met in the City of New York, and a “Pan-African Congress” in London. In the course of its sessions, the latter body issued a manifesto proclaiming the political and social equality of all races. The publication of such claims as these may or may not lead towards the biological fusion of the races, but in any case one would hardly expect Negroes to criticize the Congress on the ground that its activities do lead in this direction. However, at its first session, the International Convention, the

rival organization of the Congress, passed a resolution repudiating the Congress in all its works and ways. A few sentences from the resolution will bear quoting:

... we believe the motives of the Congress are to undermine the true feeling and sentiment of the Negro race for complete freedom in their own spheres, and for a higher social order among themselves, as against a desire among a certain class of Negroes for social contact, comradeship and companionship with the white race.

We further repudiate the Congress because we sincerely feel that ... the Congress is nothing more than an effort to encourage race-suicide by the admixture of two opposite races. ...

The Negro feels socially satisfied with himself, and means to maintain the dignity and purity of his race.

Thus it appears that the gospel of “Race First!” as preached by Mr. Houston Stewart Chamberlain and the Ku Klux Klan, has been taken over, lock, stock, and barrel, by one of the “lesser breeds” against which it was originally directed, and is now being put to a use not contemplated in the primitive revelation. We do not pretend to know the extent to which the religion of race-patriotism has been propagated among the coloured people in this country, but we have abundant evidence that in some quarters it has led to a repudiation of “white friends of the Negro,” and has even fostered a certain distrust of the mulatto. In a collection of papers published under the title “When Africa Awakens,” Mr. Herbert H. Harrison says:

Under the present circumstance we ... pledge our allegiance to leaders of our own race, selected by our own group and supported, financially and otherwise, exclusively by us. Their leadership may be wise or otherwise; they may make mistakes here and there; nevertheless, such sins as they may commit will be our sins, and all the glory they may achieve will be our glory. We prefer it so. It may be worth the while of the white men who desire to be ‘Our Professional Friends’ to take note of this preference.

Elsewhere Mr. Harrison takes the people of his race to task for holding “the degrading view that a man who is but half-Negro is twice as worthy of their respect and support as one who is entirely black.” In emphasis of his censure he says:

So long as we ourselves acquiesce in the selection of leaders on the ground of their unlikeness to our racial type, just so long will we be met by the invincible argument that white blood is necessary to make a Negro worth while.

The Negroes of America did not generate these notions spontaneously in their own inner consciousness. Racism has been bred into them and beaten into them by race-persecution, just as nationalism was bred and beaten into the Poles by the national persecution of another people of their own Slavic race. Writing in the *Negro World*, Mr. Hodge Kirnon says:

While white workers by a large majority are unwilling to admit Negro workers on an equal plane in the various fields of industry, ... Negroes must organize themselves to achieve their own ends. This is race first. When white workers recognize that their interests as workingmen are irrevocably bound up with those of Negro workingmen ... only then will ‘Race First!’ be indefensible.

In a discussion of the question, “Will Socialism free the Negro?” the editor of the *Challenge Magazine* takes much the same position. The Negro, he says:

is as much an opponent of the white proletarians who have slammed the doors of their unions in his face ... as he is of the white bourgeoisie. ... In America there are three classes. ... : white capitalists, white workers, Negroes. The former is lined off against the centre, and both are lined off against the latter, not in class, but in race-opposition.

The case for all-Africanism is brought to a startling climax by Mr. Marcus Garvey, who was elected “provisional President of Africa” by the first Inter-



national Convention of Negroes, which met in New York City in 1920. In an address delivered before the second of these conventions, which recently came to a close, Mr. Garvey said:

It may seem strange to hear the Negro talk in terms of war, but that is the only medium through which man can get salvation. . . . Don't you believe your political scientists that the next war will be a race-war? . . . White man, . . . why are you driving away from your best friend, your well-trying and true friend? Why are you driving him away from you with lynching, and burning, and Jim Crowism, and segregation, and of late throwing him out of jobs that you should give him because of your obligation to him? White man, don't you know that when the war of the races comes, if the Negro is not on your side, you are 'burned up'?

Here, then, we have a plain case of an inferiority-complex, as the Freudians say, on a racial scale. The blood of the martyrs of race-prejudice is the seed of race-patriotism. The sowing has been most systematic, and the crop is coming in. For the white reapers, we have small sympathy, for we are well assured that the blacks can bring no punishment upon them that will meet the measure of justice.

Yet when we have thus pointed out certain tendencies that seem to us natural, and perhaps inevitable in the premises, we can not forbear asking the Negroes themselves what it is that racial action can achieve, except vengeance, in a society like our own; what, in the last analysis, except the privilege of a few members of the Negro race to join the class of international, inter-racial exploiters who pay as little attention to the colour-line as they do to geographic boundaries. Must race-patriotism be tortured to death by experience, as national patriotism is being tortured to death? Can the complex of racial inferiority be cleared away only by an orgy of racial glorification?

Mr. Harrison is an apostle of racialism; but in his book he tells a story that shows how the new religion has itself been turned to account by exploiters against whom no amount of racial solidarity can give protection. He says:

When the principle of 'Race First!' began to be proclaimed from scores of platforms and pulpits, certain Negro business men saw a chance to benefit the race and, incidentally to reap a wonderful harvest of profits, by appealing to a principle for whose support and maintenance, here and elsewhere, they had never paid a cent. 'Factories' for the production of brown-skinned dolls began to spring up. . . . It was soon notorious that these leeches were charging \$3, \$4 and \$5 for Negro dolls which could sell at prices ranging from seventy-five cents to \$1.25, and yet leave a handsome margin of profit. The result is that to-day even in Negro Harlem nine out of ten Negro children are forced to play with white dolls, because rapacious scoundrels have been capitalizing the principle of 'patronize your own.'

White men "patronize their own" in this same fashion. As far as race is concerned, the white citizens of the United States are as free as men can be; and what does it come to? The Negroes who took the places of the white strikers in the Pennsylvania steel-mills a year and a half ago should know by this time what we are getting at.

### THE SAND-GAME.

THOUGHTS of the ostrich and his alleged predilection for burying his head in the sand on the approach of trouble, are suggested by the revelations, as they are called, which have resulted from the investigation recently conducted in New York City and Buffalo, by the Lockwood Committee under the directorship of Mr. Untermeyer. The investigation, it will be remembered, had its beginning in a concern about houses

—or rather about the lack of houses. Those who spend their time and effort in policing the rest of us, had become dimly aware that something was rotten in the state of Denmark. The various branches of the building-industry were reported to be conspiring to make the building of houses impossible. The price of houses had reached an intolerable figure. Of course, during the last fifty years we have been able to buy less and less house-room for a dollar, but like the ostrich we have preferred to bury our head in the sand rather than pay any attention to that disagreeable fact; it was only when the process by which we have been swindled (masked under the smoke-screen of war and post-bellum conditions) was speeded up as never before, that we began to sit up and take a little notice of what was happening. Not very much notice it is true; plunging one's head in the sand is so much easier than thinking and doing something.

If it had not been for all this sand, then, it might have been pretty generally perceived that the revelations brought forth by the Lockwood Committee are no revelations at all. Some few architects and contractors had fought the conspiracy with some success. To the rest of those concerned, the practices disclosed by Mr. Untermeyer's questioning were recognized as a part of the burden that had to be borne. The victim had to pay up, that was all; and as the one who paid was generally in a position to reimburse himself by the adoption of similar practices, men worried along somehow. What precipitated the trouble was the discovery that while moving-picture theatres, for instance, might have enough earning-power to recoup their owners for the high cost of building, and, as a consequence, could be financed by the money-lenders, people who merely wanted houses to live in could not pay rents big enough to bear the burden of extortion, and, therefore, with the general expectation that wages were to be reduced all around, and rent-paying possibilities proportionately lowered, money could no longer be borrowed for building houses.

The first stage of the investigation, it will be recalled, dealt with the manufacturers and purveyors of building-materials, and with the famous labour-leader, Brindell, who, with his fellow-conspirator, Hettrick, received a jail-sentence. There the powers of the Committee ended. An appeal for their extension finally secured from the State Legislature a reluctant permission to pry into the affairs of financial institutions only so far as concerned loans for housing. The granting of this permission brought such a storm of protest from various banks and kindred institutions as to suggest an almost painful consciousness of guilt in those quarters. But no particular attention was paid to this interesting revelation. Later, certain concrete instances of the methods pursued by what are known as reputable financial institutions, ought to have roused any self-respecting population to a wholesome anger; but our dormant citizenry still continues to put its money into savings banks and similar exploiting institutions, just as it still continues to cast ballots at election-times after innumerable deceptions and disappointments.

But, at one exciting moment during the inquiry, the supply of sand appeared to be giving out, for the *New York Times* had the courage—or had, perhaps, some one blundered?—to ask whether the disclosures were not characteristic of all business methods and therefore, possibly incurable; and the *New York World* even went so far as to suggest that, if the present form of government could not be trusted to curb the rapacity of such combinations and monopolies, the people would



have to find a form of government that would. Mr. Untermeyer, himself, bewailing the fact that the courts had refused to give jail-sentences to business men, bemoaned the inadequacy of our present laws, and demanded the enactment of further legislation.

As if any government or any legislation could curb practices which are inevitable and ineluctable under the conditions of modern business, where the object of the game is not to free the flow of production, but rather to throttle it, in order to take toll in higher prices! A vast amount of business, as the *Times* despairingly remarked, is piracy and nothing more. That is true enough, and gradually it will all become piracy, if the truth about economic rent can be hidden long enough. To protect the colossal inflations of the past and safeguard the payment of the interest demanded upon them, resort must necessarily be had to control and combination, to sabotage all around. It is idle to blame business men for these things. They can not help themselves. They are caught in a torrent stronger than any law or any Government. The moment production is freed and the supply of goods increased, prices will fall, the greatest inflations will be pricked, and the needs of a people will be satisfied. Desperate efforts are being made to avert this deflation, but unless the present inflation is thoroughly diagnosed and relentlessly dealt with, the evil day can only be postponed. Underneath the surface of things, flows the ancient river of economic wrong. As things are to-day, the beneficiaries of wrong are in the ascendant. They know how to play the sand-game thoroughly. Gullibility, stupidity, cupidity and all the emotional disturbances are on their side.

Mr. Untermeyer and the Lockwood Committee have not rendered any very great service to the community. Mr. Untermeyer could easily render such service if he would translate the testimony he has elicited into terms of economic import. He would receive the grateful praise of business men everywhere if he would tell them how to operate their business differently, and still pay the swelling tide of rent. One can not condone piracy, but when piracy is inevitable, it is difficult to sit in judgment on pirates. Brindell, taking his tribute of fifty thousand a year from the building-contractors, by promising them a strikeless job, is not one whit worse than the savings-bank which takes a fifteen-thousand-dollar-bonus for a building-loan and then obliges the borrower to take the proceeds in Liberty Bonds on which he must realize at a loss. Each is taking toll from the stream of industry at the point where he can hold up the flow of production. But except for that slip in the *Times*, the resemblance of the banker to the labour-leader is unnoticed. Those who stand low, are sent to jail; those who stand high, are fined; for the handling of money on a large scale somehow brings with it a bright halo of respectability.

### ON LOOKING AT PICTURES.

It is a prime characteristic, and perhaps a prime misfortune of the art of painting, that at the moment when the spectator's eye first falls upon a picture, the whole extent of the canvas is presented instantaneously to his vision. Whether the painter likes it or not, his picture must inevitably transmit, in this moment of initial contact, a general impression which may obscure or misrepresent the whole purpose of his work. Indeed the painter is very much in the position of the novelist who is required to begin each of his volumes with a kind of synoptic outline of all that he proposes to say in the succeeding forty-nine chapters of the book. If the es-

sence of the novel can be brought within the scope of the synopsis, the book is not worth writing, and still less worth reading. If, on the other hand, the synopsis is thoroughly inadequate to its purpose, its very presence will enable the reader to make a pretence of judging the book at a glance, and will very likely keep him from reading it, or from understanding it if he does read it.

In the absence of any such mechanical condensation as this, it is obviously impossible for anyone to run through a hundred novels in a half-hour or a half-day, and to form any opinion whatever in regard to them. Because of the very nature of his medium, the writer can be sure that no one will pretend to understand or evaluate his work without giving it at least a certain minimum of attention. The writer has some opportunity to state his case, but the painter has no protection against the public and against himself. Each of his pictures invites a snap-judgment on the basis of the synopsis which first meets the eye, and the painter, above all men, is thus subject to the demand for a fatuous and superficial product that will carry its whole meaning in this synopsis.

These reflections have dwelt with us in secret for some little time, and would perhaps have remained for ever undiscovered to the world if an anonymous committee, operating hereabouts, had not recently undertaken to stake off the limits of good and evil in the painter's art. It was the specific object of this committee to stir up a great outcry against the recent loan-exhibition of impressionist and post-impressionist paintings at the Metropolitan Museum, and thus to insure the City of New York and the country at large against the recurrence of an event which, according to this committee, has had "a destructive influence on both art and life." For a capable discussion of the significance of this exhibition, we recommend to our readers' consideration the article by Mr. Walter Pach, in the issue of this paper dated 13 July. We ourselves have no intention of engaging the committee in combat; we are not, on the one hand, disposed to debate the merits of this particular exhibition, and on the other, Ambrose Bierce's epithet of "the damned thing" just about expresses our opinion of anonymous citizens who organize themselves into anonymous committees and clutter up the mails with anonymous propaganda.

Still, this is not what we started out to talk about. It was our contention, to begin with, that the artist must necessarily have the greatest difficulty in saying anything profound, because each of his pictures presents first to view a superficial aspect, through which the populace is not likely to penetrate. We submit that if this is true, it is also true of the pictures of the modernists—of the impressionists and the post-impressionists now represented at the Metropolitan, and above all of the cubists, the futurists, and the synchro-nists who have not yet achieved this height of respectability. It requires no argument to prove that if Redon's "Silence," and Russolo's "Dynamisme d'une Auto" and Morgan Russell's "Synchronomie Cosmique" are what they pretend to be, they can not be squeezed dry at a glance. We are not trying to prove that these men and the others of their schools have something profound to say. We are simply calling attention to the obvious fact that they are concerning themselves with complex problems which can not be dealt with adequately in any short and superficial statement; and it is our whole contention that if these ambitious artists really do have something to say, they can not possibly make themselves heard and under-



stood through the medium of paint, until the business of seeing pictures has been unlearned, and learned again.

To hang pictures side by side, and tier above tier in a gallery, and thus to throw their images one after another upon the creaking senses of the spectator, is to make assurance positively sure that the artist can never deal effectively with any except the simplest and most superficial subjects. In the days of the Renaissance, men did not shuffle their murals and altar-pieces like postcards in a rack. They read them through and through, down to the last syllable, as men read the words of beloved philosophers and religious teachers. If we would "listen" to our artists as these ancients did to theirs, again and again, expectantly, devotedly, we should soon discover whether it is symphonic music or a cat's concert that the modernists are treating us to.

#### CANADIAN PIONEERS.

Nor many of those young adventurers who yearly set out to make their fortunes in Canadian farming ever give a thought to the preparations already made for them in those distant wilds of the North-west. They know that there are practically limitless unoccupied areas for them to vanish into, but do they suppose these areas unmapped, or that their portion of the wilderness has been selected by chance? They know nothing of the hardy men who first fixed the boundaries of the quarter sections which they are to inhabit, perhaps they have never heard of the little bands of pioneers, the men who are becoming a distinct type in Canada; they have never been told of the Dominion Survey parties, whose chief adventure is the return to civilization. Yet these are the men who blaze the trail for the oncoming farmers and make clear their paths.

Every year as the winter draws to its close, the Department of the Interior sends out instructions to its commissioned surveyors, who each in turn summon their two assistants. Together they leave for the outfitting-point, usually the most northerly town in their assigned direction, and the "hustling" starts. Ax-men, packers, chainers and a cook are selected from the heterogeneous collection of adventurers, half-breeds, drunks and police-dodgers who answer the advertisement in the local papers; pack-ponies (or sled-dogs for parties going north-east) are bought after a careful examination; provisions to last at least six months are selected; instruments and clothes are provided for the whole party; and finally, the date of departure is fixed. This last is not so simple a matter as it sounds. The chief of the party naturally wishes to have as long a time as possible in which to make his arrangements and to find out all available details about the trail he is to follow. But as the only convenient way into most of the northern districts is along the course of some frozen river on which sleighs can be used, the setting in of the spring-time thaw is the deciding factor, and many an exploring party has been known to start off, at a moment's notice, incomplete and somewhat panicky at the unexpected arrival of a chinook or warm wind.

Sooner or later the river-travelling has to be abandoned, and the journey continued through woods and marshes. This stage is always a critical one, as it is the first real test of the new hands who have had a comparatively lazy time during the sleighing. The new packers take over the ponies; the ax-men give their first exhibition in the work of trail-clearing; the cook has his first experience of camp life with the new gang; and the assistants sample the manifold difficulties of bossing. It is in fact an unhappy period for every one. If the distance from town has not become too great some desertions are quite probable, though the chief holds a whip hand through having previously secured signed agreements from each member of his little company, by right of which he is enabled to defer all payment till the expedition has returned to civilization once more.

Steering by compass, the chief generally goes ahead at this stage and selects a suitable trail, blazing his way as he goes. The ax-men then follow in his tracks and clear a path wide enough for a laden pony. Through very densely wooded country this slow travelling may last for weeks and is generally reckoned the most trying part of the whole journey, for the snow, which is certain to be very deep, is probably near the melting state and is too watery to prevent deep

sinking even with snowshoes. Great lumps of snow fall from each tree at every touch of the ax, moccasins get soggy, and, in spite of heavy mackinaw-clothing, every member of the expedition is soaked to the skin at the end of the day.

At length, after careful astronomical observation, the chief decides that the starting point of the survey is sufficiently close to warrant the caching of surplus stores. A camp is accordingly made, and for the next few days all hands are engaged in felling timber with which to make a strong bear-proof hiding place. Weather and wild animals are the only factors to be guarded against, as hardly any stray trapper or Indian would ever think for a moment of breaking the stern, unwritten law of the woods to the extent of robbing a cache.

The next item in the programme is the beginning of the real object of the expedition. The system of land-survey employed in Canada is, roughly, to divide the whole country into a checkerboard of townships, each of which contains thirty-six sections of one square mile, these being further subdivided into the familiar quarter sections which are offered to prospective immigrants. This checkerboard has been gradually pushed northward from the International boundary line by establishing lines six miles apart, running due north along the true meridians, and then intersected by east and west lines at every six miles northward; a process which sounds simple enough, till one remembers the intricate corrections for the convergence of meridians, the unfortunate shape of the earth, and the many astronomical observations that are entailed. A surveyor may be instructed to complete a certain number of these township-outlines, or else to spend his whole year—the parties are generally about ten months in the wilds—in producing one of the principal meridians or base lines, and he nearly always has to start his work from the finishing point of some previous survey. Thus the search for the actual starting point may take several days if the direction during the journey northward has been faulty. Once the old survey has been discovered, the work proceeds apace. All the lines that run through wooded country must be opened up, in the case of the more important outlines to a width of about thirty yards. Thus, looking back from a high hill at the work of several months, one gazes down a vista as wide and straight as a Roman road, stretching away as far as the horizon.

Though the life is a hard one and resolves itself into a monotonous chopping of trees, it is not all drudgery. Sundays are always rigidly observed as days of relaxation—too often of washing and mending clothes—and it is amusing to see how the different types select their own particular diversions. The ex-poacher wanders off, after much mysterious mixing of "scent," to try his luck at trapping; an ex-soldier will often take a hunk of bread and spend the day with his rifle, in the hopes of getting a bear or moose; the greener lads from the towns will spend hours washing for gold in some straight and muddy river (!); whilst the one-time pub-crawler will inveigle the unwary into ruinous games of poker, paid for in IOUs lodged with the chief. Often, if a man proves himself particularly good in any line, he acquires special licence to exercise his skill on other occasions. Thus, a good shot is often given whole days off at a time, provided he will bring back fresh meat—bear, moose, deer, sheep, or caribou—for the benefit of the whole camp; the practised woodman is often spared the boredom of continuous chopping by being sent to reconnoitre suitable trails and report on distant timber-belts or mineral-deposits; even a good amateur cook may get his day—though this escape is a risky one, as cooks get summary treatment from a pack of hungry woodmen!

When all its compensations are considered, life with the Dominion Survey remains a lonely and difficult one. It is healthy, financially economical, and interesting—up to a certain point; but as the work is often carried on many hundred miles from any settlement, the same twenty or thirty men, day in and day out, form the only human association. The man who joins a surveying party must look forward to being scourged by flies in the summer and half frozen by bitter winds in winter; he will be expected to negotiate raging rivers in flimsy canoes and rafts, and is likely to be chased hither and thither by forest fires; he will be out of reach of medical aid; he will receive only very occasional mail, and never a taste of drink—all this for one dollar and fifty cents a day. Yet the young homesteader, as he enters into the proud possession of his quarter section, innocently thinks that it is he who is the true Canadian pioneer!

J. F. B. O'SULLIVAN.



## A MODEST PROPOSAL.

ONE of our judges was recently quoted as having delivered the following sermon to some aliens who had just taken the oath of citizenship: "We don't need any European ideas in this country. We believe the ideas of government here, as well as the ideas of business and ethical principles which are adhered to, are far superior to those which are found in foreign lands. We want good, sound American morality as well as good, sound American government. We don't want doctrines of morality from countries where free love is tolerated."

As a native-born citizen of the United States, descended from several generations of Yankees, I rise to make a few remarks and to propose a plan which, if carried out, might go far towards preventing the evil results of the new know-nothing-ism so immoderately set forth by the learned judge. My motives are patriotic, but like the motives of all other patriotic reformers they are not wholly unmixed with selfishness. I can not help being an American any more than I can help the length of my New England nose. Other parts of this still vexed world do not at the present time offer to the immigrant inducements for permanent residence. So that though I may share the classic regret that I have but one country to which to give my life, I will stay here and work for my plan, even if I run the risk of being tarred and feathered and run out of town or of falling victim to the national sport of lynching. If I can not persuade my fellow-countrymen to help me in the work I propose, I would rather die anyway, and lynching is pretty effective as a rule, since it combines hanging, shooting, burning and dismemberment.

There is much that is commendable in the efforts of the Government and of volunteer associations to share with aliens commorant in the United States the blessings which are the birthright of our citizenry, especially the intellectual advantages which are recognized in the requirements for naturalization, such as a complete misunderstanding of the history, function, and actual procedure of our various units of government, and an imperfect comprehension of the meaning of English words. It is for the good of the foreign-born inhabitant, as well as for the good of the rest of us, that in his knowledge of history he should be the peer of the learned judge whom I have quoted, and in his knowledge of the English language, the peer of the President. The immigrant should have the same opportunity, though belated, that we natives have enjoyed, to flourish in the intellectual light of the land, so that in practical matters such as earning a living, he shall ever be aware of his position, and when he is cheated and robbed by the Government or by purely volunteer associations, or when, it may be, he is fortunate enough to become himself a government-official or a member of one of those associations, his knowledge of the history of the United States and his familiarity with whatever dialect of the English language prevails about him shall make clear to him exactly where he stands and why. Therefore the Americanization of the foreign-born is an admirable undertaking and should in no wise be discouraged. It ought not to be a hard task. According to the census of 1920 there were only about thirteen and a half million foreign-born persons in the United States. Since there are more than a hundred-million people in the country, we natives outnumber the foreign-born about seven to one. Thus if only half of us natives would give a thought to the generous work of Americaniza-

tion, or, giving no thought to it at all, simply go about our business in street, school, farm and factory, it ought not to be difficult to impart to these foreigners all the ignorance that we possess without losing much of it ourselves, and without fear of being consumed as fuel or becoming unrecognizably amorphous meat or metal in the grotesquely inept image of the melting-pot.

But there is one thing we are in danger of losing. That is the variety, the many varieties, of ignorance which the foreigners bring as their birthright, which they in part have to give up as they in part accept ours. First, there is their ignorance of their own languages which it would be a pity for our country to lose altogether; and there is their ignorance of the governments and social systems under which they were brought up; we should not let that go wholly to waste. Then, too, there is a harmless variety of manners, customs, songs, and foods that give touches of colour and odd savoury whiffs to our national life. You can go clear across Europe by walking a mile in New York, and nobody will bite you—at least, if they do, they will bite you in different ways, and that adds to the interest. These Babel-tongued peoples in the midst of us are already losing too much of their variegated picturesqueness as it is, for they all dress alike and they all dress like us—but there is good reason for that, for they make our clothes as well as their own.

We need all this variety. We natives are as uniform as railway-ties. Peas in a pod?—Rather, dried peas in a bushel-basket. We are so much alike that, for all the local prides and boastings, the man from Mr. Ole Hanson's city and the man from Mr. Calvin Coolidge's city are painfully, monotonously similar. Our books, papers, pictures, schools, streets, buildings, have all qualities except diversity. Even our fifty-seven varieties of religion have no interesting distinctions. Our very vices are mournfully identical; our criminals, professional and amateur, lack originality; you can not tell which day's head-lines you are reading, or what Congressman is speaking. That is why we elect them; they are like us and like each other and there is not a nickel's worth of choice. Our mutual resemblances could not be closer if we were actually homogeneous or if indeed we had been dumped into a pot and stewed out of shape. Our thoughts are more nearly standardized than our machines. Consider the utterance of that judge. His ideas are in spirit and substance exactly like those of an educated gentleman, a man of blood as aristocratic as blood can be in America, a literary artist, and a competent historian and biographer, Mr. Owen Wister of Philadelphia. Mr. Wister calls all foreign people in America whose political ideas he does not happen to regard as English enough to be American—cuckoos; and though he has a sense of style and imagery, this time he has forgotten both English style and American humour and imagines a cuckoo laying eggs in the nest of the American eagle! Even our artistic and aristocratic distinctions are lost in our national indifference to difference.

I propose, then, to save the bit of difference that the foreigner has to give us by taking it away from him in the regular course of Americanization and adopting it ourselves. I propose that we establish a volunteer Society for the Denaturalization of Americans. For every alien undergoing the process of naturalization the Society would have three or four native Americans in training ready to step forward and pick up the cargo of European ignorance that the alien is required to jettison. Something would be lost in the transfer, of



course, but the salvage would be considerable. Moreover, since three or four Americans would share the spoils there would be a total increase in value, as it is the nature of intellectual goods to multiply by repetition. Thus we should be getting from the foreigner more than we give, which is in accordance with the first principle of Yankee swapping.

Members of the Society and Candidates for denaturalization should be obliged to show residence in the United States for an average of six months a year for five years. Self-expatriated Americans who live in Europe should not be eligible. They are an old and long story; there have been hundreds of thousands of them since the Foundation of the Republic. Though in living abroad they are quite within their rights, show excellent judgment in their choice of residence, evince their patriotism at Fourth-of-July dinners and even contribute to civilization as a whole, yet they do more for Europe, through the shopkeepers, hotel-proprietors and dealers in art, than they do for their native land. Our motto must be: "America First." To qualify for our Society the patriot must live at home at least part of the time. Most patriots have to live at home all the time. Those who are free to travel will cheerfully submit to the inconvenience of living in their country for their country's good. It is only by sacrifice that great things are accomplished.

To carry on practically and efficiently this work of denaturalization there should be established in the cities and at suitable distances through the rural districts, educational clearing-houses where the alien could deposit his discarded errors and the native could apply for them. Such an educational system would cost money, but in America money is always easy to get for a good cause. All 101 per-cent Americans would contribute, and the foreign-born, besides acting as teachers without pay, would doubtless put in their mites out of gratitude for what we are doing for them. The popularity as well as the practical success of the plan could be assured by a series of "drives," like those to which we have become so pleasantly accustomed, with benefit-balls, banquets, and other social accompaniments.

The details of the educational requirements for denaturalization may be left for later consideration to a committee of college presidents, newspaper-editors and other experts. As has been suggested, there are two principle subjects in which the candidate should show proficiency, the history and theory of government, and foreign languages. As to the first, the prescribed minimum of knowledge may be expressed somewhat as follows: The candidate must show familiarity with "the history and birth of" any nation except the American Republic, "the basic principles of its institutions, the fundamental human reasons which have led to its growth and development." This may seem a severe strain to put even upon the superior intellect of the native American. But our standards should be high, and, besides, the quoted words are taken from a bill recently passed by the Assembly of the State of New York; so they must be right.

The question of language presents some difficulties. Now that all the nations of the earth are free and equal, the candidate should be allowed to choose any foreign language. But the effort should be to promote the study of languages likely to be useful in trade, such as French, German, Spanish and Russian. Aside from the sordid considerations of commerce, these languages are, with English, the vehicles of diplomatic communication and other sorts of higher intellectual intercourse. Since we have to send abroad literary and political ambassa-

dors, who are as a rule native Americans, and sometimes even the President, who must be a native, it is evidently advantageous to be able to select our representatives from a large number of competently denaturalized citizens. One thing should be made clear. Though the work of the Society would be chiefly concerned with foreign languages, it should not neglect the English language but should encourage the study and use of it, especially among those native Americans to whom English is virtually a foreign tongue. We should cherish and cultivate English in every possible way, and above all we should teach it to children so that in case of war with England we might throw it out of the public schools with tremendous effect.

Whether it may be advisable later to have this movement officially recognized, to petition Congress to establish Courts of Denaturalization and enact laws governing the educational requirements, duration of residence, the deportation of undesirable natives, etc., will depend entirely on the success of the preliminary volunteer work of the Society.

JOHN MACY.

## THE CASE FOR CONSUMERS' CONTROL

"PRODUCTION for use and not for profit" is a phrase that lies upon the tongue of many up-to-date religionists, social workers, economists, journalists and other kinds of handy-men who are engaged in tinkering the machinery of our social order. Yet very few are willing to take this easy phrase apart and examine into its meaning. Everybody knows that production at present is frankly organized for profit, and the profit-makers are organized to see that it remains so undisturbed; and there is small likelihood in this bleakly unsentimental world that there will be production for use on any large scale until the users themselves organize to control the producing system. In theory the problem is as simple as that; yet most of us are interested in production for the sake of the producers—who are either owners or workers—and for the most part we believe in producers' organizations alone.

The other day a strike occurred in a bakery in the little town in which I live. About one-half of the townsfolk talked about the bakery-owner's rights; the other half talked about the workers' rights, and everybody agreed that the primary purpose of the bakery was either to provide profit for the owner or wages for the workers; and in either event the consumer of the bread did not seem to matter particularly. If perchance some few tearful words were spoken in behalf of the bread-eaters, there was no suggestion that as consumers they might perhaps organize to assert their rights and exercise their economic power as the two groups of producers were doing. Yet there was a time when everybody believed that the proof of the bakery was in the bread; but nowadays we know that the chief end of baking is profits and wages, business expansion and shorter hours. To-day production is for the profit of the owners; to-morrow perhaps production will be for the profit of the workers. After that, who knows, production may be for the profit of the political State. Each of these groups seeks to control the industry as it gains the greater organized economic power. Each will produce for its own particular purpose. Yet there are few among us to suggest that consumers as consumers might organize their economic power to compel production for use.



Once upon a time the consumer was, generally speaking, supreme. The oven and the baker were both inside the home, and the needs of the family dictated the conditions of labour and the profits of capital. So with the spinning and weaving of cloth, the making of shoes, the building of the house. To-day, however, this ancient principle holds good in a few very restricted areas of life. Modern large-scale production and the concentration of economic privilege have dispossessed the consumer of the power he once wielded. He is dispossessed because he has allowed the producer to organize and has not combatted their power with an economic organization of his own, and now many excellent people seem to be convinced that consumers can not organize and that justice can come only through the organization of another group of producers—the workers. This would doubtless be a step forward, but it does not bring us to the ultimate goal, if we are really seeking a stable equilibrium in the social order. Workers' control would inevitably put the needs of the consumer after the desires of the producers. It would thus give us merely a new form of production for profit, more just perhaps than that which now obtains, but still similar to it in its essentials.

To seem to question the integrity and intelligence of our progressive labour-organizations is to run the risk in certain quarters of being called a reactionary or a renegade; yet one is constrained to raise a few questions as to the relative value for society as a whole of the organized labour-movement and the organized consumers'-movement.

First, the average worker is exploited by our present industrial system much more as a consumer than as a worker. To some extent, of course, his sufferings and discontent are due to the monotonous, exhausting and often disagreeable nature of his work, but for the most part his complaint is against low pay, long hours, the fact that as a consumer he lacks good food, clothing, education, housing, land, recreation. These are the first grievances of the industrial worker. Thus the significant fact appears that most workers' demands are consumers' demands. The worker's chief interest in his pay-envelope is in its purchasing-power; his chief interest in a shorter working-day is in the freedom it gives him for the enjoyment of the good things of life. Under modern conditions he is necessarily much less interested in his work itself than in the extrinsic reward for the work. The average workman is slow in manifesting any desire to control industry, and naturally so; for he does not in fact have any such desire, rather he wants to escape the clutches of the industrial machine or at most to control and limit the demands which it makes upon him. Thus, "to the workers the full product of their toil," becomes in itself a consumer's slogan.

When our social and economic philosophers come to study these facts more intensively than they have done heretofore, they will see that the forces of privilege resident in our economic system exploit the worker less as a producer than as a consumer. Until the workers realize the true nature and cause of their unrest, the movement towards emancipation will be slow indeed. The privileged classes know just what they want and what they are doing; the workers do not. The workers say they want power over industry whereas in truth they want the power to get just as far away from the industrial process as they can. This will continue to be so for most of them: for

there is no great intrinsic reward in the work that is done in our modern mills and factories that is anywhere near as valuable as the reward that is to be found in the free self-expression of life outside.

The present exploitation of men, women and children at the point of consumption, then, can be stopped effectively and finally only by the organization of the consumer's economic power. Nothing else can put a stop to the state of anarchy we have to-day—warehouses filled to bursting on one hand and widespread starvation on the other, and under-production running side by side with unemployment. When all people become conscious of themselves as consumers instead of as capitalists or workers, only then can they exercise their economic power. As consumers they are the endless majority. Here is the universal note, here is brotherhood in the ordinary terms of daily life, here might be true solidarity.

In all this one is not setting forth an abstract economic theory. The co-operative movement, which has made such headway in Europe since the early years of the nineteenth century, and is now developing rapidly in the United States, has for its foundation these very principles. In this movement the consumers are already organized by millions. Thousands of distributing centres throughout the world are directly under consumers' control. Hundreds of industrial establishments are producing goods for use primarily, because it is the users who own and control those industries. To be sure, the co-operative movement is still in its infancy. It is far from being self-conscious; its development springs from no carefully wrought philosophy but is largely the result of the blind instincts and impulses of millions who are oppressed and are groping their way slowly towards freedom. In fact, the movement is misinterpreted by many of its strongest adherents. Some think of it merely as a means of beating the corner groceryman. Others see it as the future commissary department for the labour-movement, or at best as a school for the initiation of the workers into the mysteries of the managerial and financial world which is to be their inheritance in the day when monopolistic privilege fails. Very few indeed, even among its adherents, know that it is a unique thing having a new social philosophy hidden beneath its foundation and carrying the promise of an economic order built for the use of the people as consumers.

The greatest common denominator of our economic life is in its primary needs: food, clothing, shelter. The co-operative movement organizes everybody on this basis; and no other economic movement does just that. On the other hand there is no great common denominator for the workers of the world as producers. Their activities vary widely, their most immediate interests as producers are often antagonistic; the makers of swords and plowshares have little in common. Thus the control of our economic system by the workers would be essentially a control over life by one or another powerful faction, and an appearance of concord would be maintained only by a highly centralized governing authority wielding supreme power.

The present idealism of labour, beautiful as it is, is rarely interpreted aright; it is the idealism of an oppressed people, born of common suffering as consumers rather than as labourers. Its tendency is towards the stimulation of a false demand for goods, the creation of false markets, the building up of an artificial supply, the exploitation of human needs in



the interest of the producers, and the control of industry to achieve high remuneration, short hours, high prices, instead of plentiful products, and low prices. This is a false orientation of life. It puts the drudge in control of society. It talks about organizing the workers for free creative expression in the control of their industries; forgetting that freedom can not be found through economic regimentation any more than through legislative enactment. Organization may reduce the drudgery of the workers, and it may supply the essentials of life, but the goal is individual freedom and group-expression through voluntary association.

The world has fixed its gaze so intently upon the two classes of producers—the profit-makers and the wage-earners—in their struggle for the control of the machinery of production and distribution, that the growing power of the organized consumers has so far escaped us. While the two highly class-conscious groups are fighting each other for the right to profit from the needs of the consumers, the co-operative movement, potentially more powerful than either, is quietly mobilizing the consumers' economic power and holding it in readiness for the time when the control of the workers is seen to fail by reason of its insufficiency.

There are some people, of course, who, while admitting the right of labour and capital to organize as economic units, still believe that the consumer can hold his own by functioning politically in the ranks of the so-called general public. But the enlightened capitalist and the wide-awake labourer are wiser in their day and generation, and each puts his chief reliance upon his economic, not his political organization.

The co-operative movement has a few simple principles which have wide significance in this connexion. It organizes the consumers by small neighbourhood-groups and relies upon the voluntary association of these groups into wholesale societies for the extension of their purchasing-power. Because all these groups have needs which are absolutely identical and are the most pressing needs of life, this voluntary association into wholesale societies usually has a greater strength than an amalgamation of labour-unions which necessarily have divergent interests and needs. Moreover, there are the producing enterprises, which are also controlled by representatives of the consumers, and thus all roads from mine, mill, forest run to the door of every consumer's home rather than to the office of the banker or to the home of a monopolist. Under such conditions the dynamic force behind all industry becomes the compelling economic need of the people instead of the cupidity of the profiteer. In a co-operative society there is an absolute equality of voting power among those who consume the goods. Citizenship depends neither upon a man's political affiliations nor upon his function as a worker, but upon his needs. Thus the movement revolutionizes our mental attitude towards industry.

In the co-operative commonwealth the greater power goes to the person most concerned with selecting the food and clothing for the family, and so the home becomes the actual centre of control over all the commerce and industry of the world. If the wife and mother continues as now to be in control of the purchase and preparation of food and clothing for her husband and children, then the woman will inevitably become the more powerful factor in the economic life. If the man seeks to obtain economic power in the

new society, he will have to become a more vital factor in the processes of home-making than he is at present.

This, then in brief, is the case for consumers' control of industry and commerce. There are yet only a handful of social philosophers who will even so much as listen to it in patience, of the many other are giving all their thought and energy to helping the majority of the producers wrest control of industry from the hands of the privileged minority, shutting their minds to the fact that when the workers are masters of their own immediate jobs there will still remain unsolved the problems of distribution, of credit, and of how to meet the multitudinous needs of the people smoothly and effectively.

The reason why the idea of the organization and exercise of the economic power of consumers is so strange and alien to us is largely because our modern methods of production are so startlingly different from those of a century ago, while the consumption of life's essentials is the same to-day as it was in the days of ancient Greece. The vast drama of large-scale production has so completely captivated our imaginations that we glorify the actors and forget the audience. Consumption is seen merely as an individual matter, apparently lacking in social significance. But now the time has come when as consumers we must replace our individualistic philosophy of life with a social philosophy. Inevitably those with the greatest organized economic power will rule the coming social order. Potentially, the consumers possess the greatest power. In the consumers' commonwealth the drudgery of the worker will be reduced to a minimum, and in the greater liberty will come the opportunity for which all normal men have yearned in all ages—the opportunity for service to their fellows in freedom, to create at the behest of life rather than at the behest of a master.

CEDRIC LONG.

#### LETTERS FROM A DISTANCE: XV.

MY TENT, SOUTH AFRICA, July, 1921.

MY DEAR EUSEBIUS, the trees here have broken into red and yellow flowers, by way, I imagine, of expressing their thankfulness for all the water with which they have been supplied. There was rather too much water for me, so I have no need to do anything in the matter except to take brush and paint and make a note of a scarlet tree against a hot blue sky. I have broken into paint lately, urged on by my inveterate vice of exploration and in the hope of interrupting my habit of making notes with my pen, which ought by now to be more strenuously employed, though I think perhaps a writer is entitled to make notes until he is forty, by which time he should be fairly sure of the range of his experience.

Forty! If I can have ten good, productive years between forty and fifty I shall be more than content and shall not grudge even the time spent on politics and the war. Indeed, I shall have more reason to grizzle over a youth spent on the intellectual drama, most youthfully never suspecting that there is no such thing. There is drama or there is not drama, and there is no qualifying it. To attempt to do so is to produce a complete negation of it, as indeed happened with the earnest persons who, when I was young, set to work to abolish the tricks of the stage, and came to believe that any work in dialogue which dispensed with artificially continued scenes and forced crises must elevate and enlighten an audience. But no audience wants to be elevated or enlightened: enlivened, yes, quickened, yes, but improved—no, no, no! Who cares for the morals of Macbeth? Who gives a thought to the ethics of *Œdipus*? The quickening, breathless sympathy of the drama is all that matters, and



the awakening of that sympathy is the only means I know by which the drama can be defined. Bernard Shaw, when he is rattling off good, easy farce arouses it, but kills it when he would be serious, and who else is there besides Shaw? Ingenious writers for the stage there are in plenty but there is a singular lack of the spontaneous dramatic gift which, perhaps, can only find expression in times of splendour when men and women are for a period reckless enough to be honest. How can it emerge in a time of squalid humbug like the present, when to sustain his accustomed social position or even to survive at all, a man must feign to have no private thought on public matters, and ends most often in having no thought at all even in those affairs which most intimately concern him?

In that case it becomes a very profitable business for writers of plays and novels and scribblers for the newspapers to supply the public with fudge, and publishers and theatrical managers become dealers in that commodity, the demand for which is inexhaustible. They can not admit it, because to do so would be to become clear-headed and it is the essence of fudge to be muddled; besides, once you know that you are supplying fudge you can not do it. You have to believe that the stones you are supplying really are bread, because it is of the essence of the contract that your word should be taken for it, and you can not lie successfully to another until you have lied successfully to yourself. What would happen, for instance, if the booksellers inscribed over their stores the words, DEALERS IN FUDGE (in large letters) and BOOKSELLERS (in letters of becoming modesty)? Would the public admit that it needed fudge and pay good dollars for it? What would be said if the reviewers wrote, as they ought, of the best-sellers: "Mr. X. is perfectly absurd as a novelist, but as a purveyor of fudge he is so miraculous as almost to be an artist. If there were in his work only a little intelligence, passion, sense and sensibility there would be something approaching genius." Or "Mr. Y.'s plays show not the faintest inkling of dramatic instinct or skill, but his nose for the particular lie inevitably appropriate to a particular situation is unerring. No woman of the world need go any further than these volumes. The man is not born who can counter the technique supplied by Mr. Y." Probably nothing would happen. The need for fudge is too terribly real. Education has created a vacuum in millions of heads which must be filled with the minimum of discomfort, and the result of it all is that society is gradually settling down into two classes, those who supply fudge and those who mop it up. This process is making nonsense of political and economic principles and is forcing the artist into his proper position, that of an outlaw, a member of the criminal classes who, with his peculiar gifts, can make a living without thieving.

On the whole, I think this is an advance. If society is reduced to nonsense, there is bound to be a reaction towards sense, and the restoration of validity to institutions and traditions, which is the first step towards retrieving in the twentieth century the incalculable mischief that was done in the nineteenth. Therefore, I say, more power to the elbows of the fudge-makers, for, when they begin to deal in sense the artists will be free to take unto themselves that adorable nonsense without which there is no soaring power in the wings of fancy, and without that there is no poetry, nor drama, nor comely painting, nothing but digging and delving, and making notes and—writing letters from a distance.

An artist—but there is nothing whatever to be said about art and artists. What is not said in art need not be said at all. There is much virtue in silence. If a man comes to you and you say nothing, he either respects you or he goes away. He must do one or the other and either is clear gain.

Of late I have begun to enjoy a delightful sense of not being anywhere in particular, and I hope I shall never lose it. I am sure it is better to be a man on the earth than a Londoner in London or a Canadian in Canada or a

Fijian in Fiji; all of whom are only more distressing away from their surroundings than in them, savages all in the narrowness of their outlook and their dependence on a set of narrowly prescribed habits, and their hatred of those whose habits are different. So long as I retain this sense of not being anywhere in particular, I can enjoy London, Paris, Peking, where you please, and need never indulge in odious comparisons. There is no need for me to contrast my life here with the life that I lived in London. I have but one life and that should be, as it is, pressed down and running over—not to waste, but into other lives, dearer to me than my own and into my work which, like the tale of Scheherazade, never ends, but is always beginning with a longer and more desperate view of what lies ahead: yet the more desperate, the more heart and zest there is to it, the less admixture of frail ambition and literary fervour: that ferment which produces so much froth and so little virtue.

I met a man yesterday who knows a man in London who knows a man who knows myself. The connexion is so circuitous as to be hardly worth mentioning, but my acquaintance insisted on it to such a degree that I could see he was not using his own eyes and intuitions to find out what I was like, but started out and ended with what his friend's friend had said about me. What hope then is there of this man and myself getting to know each other? His friend and his friend's friend stand between us, an impermeable barrier of uninterested minds. An amazing habit this of preferring what some one has said to what you can find out for yourself. It betrays a fundamental lack of interest, a condition of mind so universally prevalent that it is amazing that any attention whatsoever is paid to gossip, scandal or rumour, and yet everywhere the veriest tag is preferred to what is obvious to an alert pair of eyes. The trouble is that we can not speak without lying, human language being as yet so clumsy an instrument that except in the hands of a rare and tormented genius a thought or an idea in utterance becomes a lie and a source of trouble and misery, and the probability is that nine-tenths of our ideas are crazy and injurious, while the certainty is that *all* those ideas which are collectively held are utterly worthless.

What then is to be done about it? We must start again, first clearing away the debris of the ruins of the old mental life. There is no great hurry. We can exist pleasantly enough without a mental life, though our salvation depends on the creation of one, wide as the sky and splendid as the earth from which no one is excluded. If, dear Eusebius, you find it hard to form your own idea of a human being you might begin practising on a tree, as I am doing just now, though my effort is in order to fumble into some sort of skill with paint. It is extraordinary what a little concentration will do. It would take me a year or two to learn how to paint my tree, though I may remain a helpless amateur in painting, yet I shall have in a week or two a much more truthful idea of the life of a tree than I could gain from any book or from anyone who really believed himself to know all there is to know about trees. There is no knowing all there is to know about anything, and that is all we know and all we need to know, and there could be nothing more beneficial than the experiment of turning from a medium in which I am very much at home to a medium in which I have an almost comical lack of skill. I almost feel that I have no right to use the word tree until I have learned to paint one, so great is the respect I have found for the whole race of trees in my daily study of this old, grey fig-tree whose magnificence and serenity and subtlety compel every day a harder and more concentrated scrutiny. If it is so with trees, how then with the thousand times more subtle and more elusive human beings; and how can such rigid things as laws and states and armies ever have been imposed on them? Only surely, through carelessly evolved ideas from which their life has grown more and more remote.



Learning so much from trees and horses and dogs, you may guess how I began to perk up at the idea of returning to New York and learning from human beings—at their best where they are most mixed. So—plans begin to emerge. A plunge into the unknown wilderness of nature, beast and insect; and then a final plunge into the wilder jungle on the life of man in civilization, vast areas of which remain unexplored, awaiting their Mandevilles and Marco Polos: a real job for the literary man at last. Why not? There is the moving picture to tell people the lies they want, and literature should be as greatly relieved by the cinematograph as modern painting has been by the camera: it should become a dangerous trade for the adventurous, for, as a respectable profession it is intolerable.

GILBERT CANNAN.

## MISCELLANY.

I AM tempted to set down on paper some of the reflections that arose in my mind a short while since on receiving the programmes for 1921 of two famous summer-schools. One of these announcements was the catalogue of a great metropolitan university; it set forth the usual omnium gatherum of science, literature and art, beginning with aesthetics and ending with zoology; and as I looked through its pages and surveyed its astonishing statistical records, I could not keep the term "mass-intellectualism" out of my mind; and I recalled what a certain faithful and distinguished scholar had once said to me about this very institution. "Our great universities," he explained sardonically, "are operated like a large factory for the manufacture of cheap automobiles. The product won't last very long, but it will do some of the things that an automobile is supposed to do; and at all events the owner, who has never possessed anything better, will not know the difference."

THE other announcement came to me from a summer-school in England which I once had the pleasure of attending; it offered a sharp contrast to our typical, overgrown American institution; and it was hard to believe as I looked through the modest prospectus that these two organizations belonged to the same species. It is probable that few Americans realize how much can be learned from these English summer-schools about methods and habits of work which have up to now been pretty generally disregarded in American universities, in both winter and summer. The contrast is all the more pertinent for the reason that the origin of these English summer-schools can be traced back, I believe, to Professor Patrick Geddes's summer-meetings at the Outlook Tower in Edinburgh in the 'nineties, and have therefore no formal connexion with the established English university-system.

THE capital difference between the English summer-schools and ours lies in the remoteness of the former from the conventional channels of higher education. More than this, however, the institutions that conduct many of these English schools are not officially educational institutions at all; they are bodies like the Fabian Society, the Civic Education League, the National Council for Maternity and Child Welfare, the Regional Association, and the Co-Operative Movement; groups that have a definite vision of the good life, or of some part of it, and seek, by educational means, to deepen its intellectual foundations and expand its influence. In the third place, since the English summer-school makes scarcely any pretence of carrying on regular academic work, its session is much shorter than that of the American model, and the week or the fortnight during which it is held has some of the qualities of the more vagrant sort of vacation.

IN order to understand clearly how the English summer-school works, it is important to realize how it may be placed. Let me describe the environment of a fairly

representative school. Project yourself into a little industrial town in the bosom of the Chiltern Hills, somewhere between London and Oxford. You are in a region that has been used and cultivated by human beings for thousands of years; not a great distance from the little town, are pits where neolithic miners dug for flints with reindeer-horn axes, and on the hills themselves are cirques and barrows where some dim religion was once practised. As you approach the present day you discover the nucleus of a little market-town, with its parish church, market-hall, and inns, and its cluster of solid, overhanging, sixteenth-century houses whose fine half-timbered fronts some Victorian plasterer once desecrated in the name of progress.

As a student, you are in a town that fills you with the consciousness of a visible civilization, and a feeling for the continuity of things; at the same time you are not far away from the great beach forests which dome the hills and give the town the basis for its principal industry—furniture-manufacturing. Yet do not misunderstand me, this is no mere refuge from contemporary sophistications; no outlandish camping by the forest primeval. Up and down the longitudinal valley are a number of factories given over to wood-working and paper-making; and the voice of metropolitan London, roaring for desks to bend over and paper to write upon, never leaves the ear entirely tuned to rural silence; and as you follow the old coach-road toward London, you encounter a fine string of nineteenth-century slums, all in a gloomy state of disrepair, as bleak as anything that Stepney or Battersea can show. With chain-stores and a moving-picture theatre not a stone's throw from the old market-hall designed by the brothers Adam, you have thus before your very eyes a fairly representative cross section of contemporary English life, economically, socially, historically; and the town, you would correctly surmise, has been deliberately selected as the meeting-place of the school with a view to all these varied phenomena.

It would be impossible to detail a typical curriculum of these English summer-schools, since they vary with the purposes which each particular school seeks to achieve. What is perhaps more important than the curriculum is the atmosphere in which the work is conducted. The school, first of all, is small enough to be a real community. It is not merely a multitude of individuals "taking courses" but an active *collegium* of students who have gathered together under the guidance of a handful of teachers in order to conduct an exploration into the life about them. In this respect the English summer-school has not a little of the character of the early university: the student, the teacher, and the study itself are of greater concern than the administrative mechanism which exists, theoretically, to promote their efforts. With a small corpus of students, in that little town in the Chiltern Hills, it was possible to tap all the resources of the environment, and direct them into the discussion of otherwise abstract subjects. Thus in the school I am describing, the lecturer on architecture drew many of his illustrations from the buildings of the town; the lecturer on economics, likewise, could literally point to the unenclosed commons in the locality and trace out the effect of this open public land upon the economic independence of the lace-makers and wood-turners. The compactness of the local community made it possible to see clearly the relation of things: thus the student enjoyed that vivid contact with his immediate surroundings which is possibly one of the explanations of the clearness and straight thinking of Plato's Republic.

CONTRAST all this with the bewildering throwback that marks a student's entrance into a metropolis like New York, especially in the few short weeks of a summer-session. The metropolis is not drawn to human scale, and its chief universities, alas! are little better than a mirror of their city. For the greater part the summer-students live in the great college dormitories, and are not,



as in the English summer-school, billeted on the inhabitants. Here is a loss to begin with, because a college dormitory in New York is much the same as a college dormitory in Chicago or Berkeley, and it does not give the student the beneficent shock of a complete change of environment. Being merely an individual, the metropolitan student studies as an individual; hence the comminuted courses that are offered by the American university, when they do not lead directly to a mere proficiency in vocation, are the isolated subjects of a personal culture, so-called, whose development has gone hand in hand with that great de-personalization which our mechanical achievements seem to have wrought in our modern life.

AGAINST the dispersed "culture" that is offered in our American universities, the English summer-schools are pragmatic in the best sense—they are pointed toward a fuller life. As Aristotle described the good polity as a community of equals living the best life possible, so one might describe the good university as a community of intelligent people thinking about the best life possible. Both the polity and the university are indispensable to each other; and the weakness of our metropolitan education lies largely in the fact that it either cuts the student off from the polity, making him "academic," or it forces him to think in terms of a polity so large—the "nation," "empire," "humanity"—that he is overwhelmed by the insignificance of any particular contribution of his own, and so relapses into a weary cynicism.

EVEN did we sacrifice a little of the administrative discipline of our American colleges, we could well afford, it seems to me, to carry over a little of the English summer-school's inventiveness and freshness. I can imagine a summer-school in Danbury, Connecticut, for example, which would have all the charm and interest belonging to that English school in the Chilterns, and its coming to Danbury might stir up that pleasant little town as effectually as these English summer-schools so frequently do the towns they have visited. We do not need the witness of Mr. Sinclair Lewis to realize that there are thousands of Danburys throughout these United States, and thousands of towns below the level of Danbury. It lacks only a certain quality of initiative, and a willingness to dispense with megalomaniac statistophiles, for schools to be started in our country which would achieve something that both our metropolitan and our rural Chautauquas are wholly incompetent to perform. I can not help thinking that something of this nature is badly needed these days as an offset to our Gradgrindian metropolitan universities, and their imitators.

JOURNEYMAN.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

### TWO RUSSIANS.

SIRS: I am interested to see in your current issue that Journeyman's friend, X., has written in a recent letter from Berlin, "Maxim Gorky is expected here this week. Hauptmann is here awaiting his arrival." The daily press tells us that the object of Gorky's visit to Germany is to plead the cause of his starving fellow-countrymen, and from a private letter from Stockholm I have just learned that "Madame Gorky delivered an address here to-day on the misery in Russia"; from which I infer that the novelist's wife is in Sweden seeking aid for her compatriots.

I am constrained to ask how it is that with millions of Russians starving and every able-bodied person doing his best to lend a helping hand. Merejkowsky can find it possible to make public a letter to Hauptmann denouncing Gorky as "one of the greatest living enemies of the Russian people," "the tool of Lenin," "a Bolshevik of the worst and reddest type, etc. etc."?

Merejkowsky and Gorky are among the greatest novelists of the day; both, I believe, were opponents of the Soviet rule, but Gorky, accepting what seemed inevitable, allied himself with the *de facto* government as being the only effective way of helping his fellow-countrymen; while Merejkowsky, still on the outside, rages as violently against Gorky seeking aims

for his people as if Gorky were withholding or obstructing such aid.

Can it be that Merejkowsky's attack is merely an inversion of the remorse he feels at having spent these last few years shaking his fist instead of extending his hand? I am, etc.,  
DMITRI DONSKOV.

### WHAT ARE THE WILD WAVES SAYING?

SIRS: I would have you know that the waters of Vineyard Sound, off the Massachusetts coast, no less than the oily waves of Narragansett Bay, are of a sort that on occasion may direct attention to matters of political interest. Take, for example, the case of my new bathing-suit. After a few dips, and some hours of basking in the noon-day sun, alas! the natty blue trunks faded to a dull greyish blue, mixed in with streaks of the original colour. The dye used, one infers, was not fast, though American. In future, I shall follow with heedful amusement the activities of the junior Mr. Choate, the learned counsel for the Dye trust. I am, etc.,  
FULMEN.

### A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS.

SIRS: You may be interested to see a copy of the letter I have just sent to Mr. Eugene Meyer, jun., the Managing Director of the War Finance Corporation in Washington, D. C., regarding his approval of the plan for funding the railways' indebtedness at the expense of the national treasury:

Sir: I notice your approval of the plan for funding the railway's indebtedness through the public treasury, and your statement that it would help the unemployment situation.

In view of the assistance the railways have already had, I think the scheme should be employed for the benefit of others. Thus I am in debt with payments overdue and business poor. I have a stone retaining wall that threatens to fall down and I have no money to pay for rebuilding it. But if I can, with your assistance, fund my debts for a long time, so long that they may be forgotten or forgiven, I will at once employ stone-masons, labourers, teamsters and others, to rebuild that wall. The money paid out in wages will be spent in mine (or other people's) stores and we in turn will start to order from the factories and they will start to ship goods on the railways and the railways will get money to pay their men's wages and their own debts—and they will have no need to refund.

If my need for a new stone retaining wall is not sufficient to make the whole country busy again I know lots of friends and acquaintances who have thousands of wants in other directions, and for the refunding of our debts we shall need more money than the railways. I also see by the papers that a lot of merchants are going bankrupt because they can't cash their debts, let alone their assets; and if they too could all have their debts refunded I know there would be lots of business.

There are many people who are out of work who can't pay their grocer; these too ought to have their debts refunded before the railways are helped since these people never had the benefit of such assistance before and the railways have.

Please let me know where I shall apply to have my debts funded as I want to get at it to rebuild that stone wall as soon as possible. I am, etc.,

So far I have received no reply from Mr. Eugene Meyer.  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.  
H. W. NOREN.

### JUSTICE AND EUGENE DEBS.

SIRS: When Judge Westenhaver confirmed the conviction of Eugene Debs and passed sentence upon him for remarks alleged to have been made by him in a public speech, he obviously acted on the assumption that American citizens can be prosecuted for freely expressing their views on certain matters. He must have taken this view in spite of the fact that the constitution, in clear and unequivocal language, as intelligible to a layman as to a lawyer, prohibits Congress from abridging freedom of speech. However, this affair took place during the war. Had Mr. Debs been acquitted, or had his conviction not been upheld, there is no telling what might have happened. Mobs had practically carte blanche from constituted authorities to act according to their wishes towards anyone distasteful to these same authorities. The judge would probably have been denounced by the hysterical plutocratic press, which instigated the still unpunished mobbing of Mr. Herbert S. Bigelow, of Cincinnati, and deliberately lied about Senator La Follette. Under the circumstances, no other verdict or decision could have been looked for than was actually returned. It was but human nature for both judge and jury to persuade themselves that their action was right. This may account for the following letter written to me by Judge Westenhaver sometime later:

Dear Sir: I have received in letters with your name various clippings dealing with the doings of one Eugene V. Debs.

In order to save you trouble in the future, I am writing to advise you that I am not interested in the sayings or doings of anyone who commits or plots crimes against the constitution and laws of the country that I am sworn to support.



For your own welfare, I would advise you to inform yourself on the subject, lest you yourself may suffer in standing and reputation, as some others I have known in the past are doing.

D. C. Westenhaber.

But let not this letter be judged too harshly. It requires greater courage than most of us possess to acknowledge an injustice, especially where the injustice has been applauded as justice by those whose approbation is pleasant and whose condemnation is painful. In the light of a later decision let us feel assured that the injustice, even if not condoned, will not be repeated. The later decision upheld Mr. Henry Ford in his rights under the constitution, which were denied Eugene V. Debs. It denied the right of the municipal authorities of Cleveland to interfere with the sale of Mr. Ford's paper, the *Dearborn Independent*. Here is the decision:

That such action is taken in good faith under a belief that the article in question tends to create religious and racial dissension may be conceded, but the law in all its long history supplies no instance in which either a race or a religion won the approval and disarmed the prejudices of another people by forbidding the latter to write and speak their minds freely. Be this however as it may, there is no more justification for prohibiting its sale on the streets than there would be to prohibit the sale of the Cleveland paper whose political views and personal attitude on other questions met with their disapproval. If the defendant's action were sustained, the constitutional liberty of every citizen freely to speak, write and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible only for the abuse of that right, would be placed at the mercy of every public official who for the moment was clothed with authority to preserve the public peace, and the right to a free press would be likewise destroyed.

Mr. Debs is still in jail and he might quote this decision, if he wished to do so, to show that he is not there for overstepping his constitutional rights. I am, etc.,  
*Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

DANIEL KIEFER.

#### THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF FREEDOM.

SIRS: One hears talk on every hand nowadays regarding an amnesty for political prisoners—this country alone among the Allies not having performed this duty long since as a matter of course.

There is a certain aspect of the matter that I think should be more widely appreciated. So far, any consideration of "amnesty" has been officially conditioned on individual application for "pardon." Last May, a conference in Chicago proposing to work for the release of political prisoners asked the group incarcerated at Leavenworth, Kansas, for an expression of opinion on the subject. The character of the reply, signed by four-fifths of the entire number, is indicated in the following quotation:

Individual application for 'pardon' inevitably implies that the remaining defendants are 'guilty'... All are innocent of any crime and all should receive the same consideration if justice be done. . . . We wish it understood that neither our position nor our point of view has changed regarding the necessity for solidarity. . . . We are not conscious of having violated any law and therefore can not consistently make application for 'pardon.'

The man who framed this reply and whose name heads the list of signers—J. T. ("Red") Doran—in a subsequent letter to a friend, wrote:

To ask for individual 'pardon' is, in my opinion, disloyal not only to those of the group who are not perhaps so widely known as others may be, but also to the cause itself. . . . I believe that the moral value of our cause is, socially, very great, and great educational service may be accomplished through the present situation. . . . I am not guilty of anything but an honest and lawful attempt to make the world a better place in which to live.

Thus it appears that this man is voluntarily serving his full sentence rather than take advantage of the offer of influential friends to secure his individual release. It has been argued, of course—as also in the case of Mr. Debs—that the "mere formula" of "pardon" is a negligible detail. But in reality it is not a matter for argument, "the social contract is signed in a man's own soul, or it is not signed at all." Obviously these men personally have nothing to gain and everything to lose by the stand they are taking. Believing as they do, that industrial salvation can come through solidarity alone, they as honest men, are doing the only thing that they can do. When one realizes even the mere physical conditions under which these men deliberately choose to suffer continued imprisonment—the sentences of some of them are for twenty years—rather than obtain release at the price of disloyalty to their moral standards, one can understand something of the stuff these men are made of. The mere fact of being confined throughout the summer's heat in cells measuring only 6x9x4, wretchedly lighted and ventilated, with two men in each cell and on Sundays kept there for eighteen consecutive hours, can any one of us

imagine ourselves living under such conditions, day in and day out, for years on end? Can we form any conception of the inevitable reaction, physical and mental? Let us try for one moment to realize fully what this long torture means, and then let us try to understand in terms of *character* what the ideal of "solidarity" must mean to these imprisoned men. This is no little thing that they are doing.

Hegel points out that "the history of mankind is but the history of the increasing consciousness of freedom." But how many of us to-day give even a thought to the various contemporary expressions of this increasing consciousness? Yet what is there in all the world more richly significant for thought and study?

As I see it, these political prisoners—whatever their religious or industrial creed or creedlessness may be—in the stand they are taking, have raised the whole matter to a spiritual plane and have become essentially a part of the spiritual forces that are at work in the world to-day. I am, etc.,

*Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.*

J. C. WARD.

## BOOKS.

### MR. SHAW'S BIBLE.

SINCE the English assumed the designation of Chosen People, even to the poetic touch of acquiring the patch of Mesopotamian real estate in which the title is traditionally vested, English literary producers have, naturally turned to the making of bibles describing the creation, history and destiny of an English world. In "Back to Methuselah" Mr. Bernard Shaw seems to have followed the example of Mr. H. G. Wells in this commendable industry.

For such a task Mr. Shaw is admirably fitted. He says a consequential thing in such a merry way that the philistines are forced to regard him as a sort of perverted comic supplement, and hence give him the serious attention they would be incapable of devoting to a well-labelled philosopher. Their loud-voiced contempt and derision have so advertised him that he is almost as well known as Mutt and Jeff, and his ideas have virtually been elevated to the plane of popular complexes. By the device of placing his plain truths at the end of a slapstick and walloping his neighbours over their posteriors with them, Mr. Shaw has deceived his victims into believing that he is a buffoon rather than a moralist, and thus he has escaped crucifixion at the hands of the politicians and the clergy, in spite of the fact that he had the audacity to usurp the true rôle of the Church in excommunicating the late war. Through this and other efforts he has acquired an enormous prestige among the Jews, who of all peoples are always first to pay tribute to the Christian spirit whenever they see it; and as it is the Jews who set the intellectual standards in most of the advanced countries, Mr. Shaw holds an almost unique position among the elect. His comedies are produced at the best theatres, where they are enjoyed by simple-minded hundred-per-centers, and he has the endorsement of Lenin, who is the inheritor of the puritan tradition in its broader aspects. In short, the fellow has vogue. This he has not dissipated by confusing civilization with a passion for antitoxins and sanitary soaps, like Mr. Wells and the Germans; at sixty-five he still refuses to bore us. Finally, an Englishman only by adoption, he has preserved a sufficient modicum of Celtic common sense and courtesy so that he can dabble in history without insulting the pride of those of us who have not been fortunate enough to be born under the flag of the symbolic double cross on which the sun never sets.

In the case of many of Mr. Shaw's plays the preface is the thing. In the quintology comprising "Back to Methuselah" the preface serves merely, with enlivening discursions running to the length of one hundred pages, to place a label on the plays. Mr. Shaw announces that he finds himself inspired to make a legend of Creative Evolution. His thesis is simple: by the time we are getting old enough to acquire sufficient common sense to regulate our affairs, the undertaker is already peering in at the win-

<sup>1</sup> "Back to Methuselah: A Metabiological Pentateuch." Bernard Shaw. New York: Brentano's.



dow. Our brief allotted span is insufficient to enable us to establish ourselves like decent human beings. We are so thoroughly obsessed with childish terrors that we spend most of our time preparing or perpetrating wholesale murder and devastation. The only way to escape the result of our own muddling is to recapture the art of longevity. If we will to live 300 years or more, we can do the trick.

Sensibly enough Mr. Shaw puts his faith in a miracle of creative evolution rather than in the spindling efforts of the scientists. In our time science has become largely a mendicant and handmaiden of privilege, and if one of the mountainous scientific foundations established as a by-product of privilege were to labour and bring forth an extension of human life for a year, it would probably be used merely for the purpose of getting five years more of work out of us and thus increasing the dividends.

Mr. Shaw concludes his humble preface thus:

My sands are running out; the exuberance of 1901 has aged into the garrulity of 1920; and the war has been a stern intimation that the matter is not one to be trifled with. I abandon the legend of Don Juan with its erotic associations, and go back to the legend of the Garden of Eden. I exploit the eternal interest of the philosopher's stone which enables men to live for ever. I am not, I hope, under more illusion than is humanly inevitable as to the crudity of this my beginning of a Bible for Creative Evolution. I am doing the best I can at my age. My powers are waning; but so much the better for those who found me unbearably brilliant when I was in my prime. It is my hope that a hundred apter and more elegant parables by younger hands will soon leave mine as far behind as the religious pictures of the fifteenth century left behind the first attempts of the early Christians at iconography. In that hope I withdraw and ring up the curtain.

In the first of the five plays the scene is laid in the Garden of Eden, with Adam and Eve and the Serpent. In the last play the action is carried to 31,920 A. D., which it seems is as far as Mr. Shaw's thought can reach, and obviously thousands of years farther than the reach of any of his critics that has yet come under our notice. In this first play we find Adam profoundly disturbed by the problem of being Adam throughout eternity, until the Serpent instructs Eve in the mysteries of procreation, thus enabling the founding father, so to speak, to pass the buck. The narrative carries through the introduction of militarism by Cain, who, after the manner of his kind, is stupid, romantic, and too lazy to work.

The second play is set in the present day. The brothers Barnabas, an unfrocked clergyman and an unfounded professor of biology, have invented the idea of readjusting the span of human life to 300 years. Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Asquith, thinly disguised under the names of Burge and Lubin, in the course of a social call on the brothers, are informed of the possibilities of this epoch-making change. Naturally they assume at first that the brothers are discussing a newly invented patent medicine, and they eagerly project the possibility of limiting its use to the best people; but they lose interest when they find the thing is merely a biological thesis. Mr. Lloyd George, however, perceives that the idea might be made to serve the purpose of an election slogan, somewhat like the scheme of hanging the Kaiser.

The third play brings us to 2170 A. D. At this period England is governed by efficient administrators in the form of Chinamen and Negresses, with a golf-playing Premier continued in office for appearances' sake. Parliament is still retained, its membership being recruited largely from the insane asylums, a method that at once serves the purpose of giving congenial occupation to the inmates and assures a supply of ideal parliamentarians. The first long-livers, dating from the time of the brothers Barnabas, who had concealed their defection from normalcy in order to avoid trouble with the authorities, are just being discovered.

By the year 3000 the British Isles have been abandoned to the long-livers. The short-livers have moved the seat of the Empire to Bagdad; and the Irish, cast off to self-determination, with every political sense save that of nationalism atrophied, have deserted their country with a

disgusted feeling of frustration and aimlessness. Mr. Shaw manages to indicate a pretty far advanced state of society achieved by the long-livers. Something of the ancient British idea persists in them, it would seem, for there is a considerable party devoted to the idea that they should go forth and exterminate all the short-livers in the world, for highly moral reasons. Mr. Shaw introduces a pilgrimage of exalted political personages from Bagdad to consult the oracles maintained by the long-lived, with much appropriate hocus-pocus, for the entertainment of such immature visitors. Before the oracle works, the attendants, with characteristic contempt for the pilgrims, carefully expose all the hocus-pocus; but the visitors, like true Anglo-Saxons, have made up their minds to be hoaxed seriously, and they are not to be swerved from their purpose. The Shavian slapstick was never wielded to better effect than in this interlude.

Thence Mr. Shaw skips lightly to 31,920 A. D., and we are introduced to a society of multi-centenarians so highly sublimated that they have aroused most of the critics of the book to disgust and resentment. The race has become oviparous, and Mr. Shaw, possibly with an eye to production under Mr. Flo Ziegfeld, introduces the spectacle of an 18-year-old flapper born all complete out of the egg. These mature youngsters lead for four years a hedonistic existence, preoccupied with sex and the arts, after which they enter the status of ancients, a super-spiritualized and super-intellectualized progression which even the far-sighted Mr. Shaw is able to indicate only in a sketchy way. They are no longer interested in such childish things as singing and dancing and mating, and the doll-play of art. They have thought and known and lived all things, and their great ambition is to dispense altogether with their bodies—to be vortex. "Infant," remarks an ancient to a sceptical youth, "one moment of the ecstasy of life as we live it would strike you dead."

To 1921 this elder existence may well seem to be one of almost intolerable austerity. By a clever device, however, the author has sought to disarm his critics. A youthful Pygmalion moulds statues of two human beings, a man and a woman, and a young biological chemist endows them with life. Their reactions are precisely those of persons commonly called our best people to-day. In that advanced society they stand out as intolerable examples of bombastic pretence, stupidity, mendacity and cruelty. After they have strutted about for a brief period, an ancient directs a glance of annihilation at these barbarous revivals, and they are removed to the incinerator.

Mr. Shaw's bible is no negligible achievement. It can not, as some critics have imagined, be dismissed seriously. We have a suspicion that it may outlast not only the author's time, but the social order of which his countrymen are the mainstay. Curiously enough the British people seem to be emulating the Chosen People of an older time, in that they are preparing the way for their own dispersion, now that the Kaiser failed to parallel the rôle of Titus. At the present rate of British imperialist expansion, so many of Mr. Shaw's countrymen will be drawn to far-flung regions for purposes of administration and colonization and murder that in a few decades the British Isles must inevitably be depopulated. It may be that the only centralizing force for the British race of the future will be this Shavian Bible. Possibly, hundreds of years hence, the texts from the Commissar Jimovitch Version will be read to matutinal school-children in every part of the globe, the meaning being painstakingly perverted, we may assume, to suit the propaganda of the ruling powers of the period.

HAROLD KELLOCK.

### NOW IT CAN BE TOLD.

WITH swift and deadly precision the economic interpretation of history makes headway against political mythology. It captures the imagination of the young generation of economists and historians. It crowds to the wall the compilers and annotators of diplomatic futilities and political rhetoric. Ignored by the official element in the American Historical Association, it finds lodgment in the



minds of the rank and file. Condemned by college presidents, omniscient editors, and Chautauqua circuit-riders, it conquers the minds of those who are determined to see things as they really are and to be rid of verbiage once and for all. It makes way against every obstacle, just as natural science crushed through dogmatic theology, not because it is complete and flawless, but because it offers the best and most satisfactory working-hypothesis with which to attack the phenomena of social evolution. Under the influence of this hypothesis the origins of the American revolution, the formation of the constitution, the rise of political parties, every staple theme of American history is being recast. Men who ignored it or laughed at it ten years ago are now lamely explaining away their former myopia. Some may now minimize it or denounce it, but none now dares to neglect it.

Within three years of the signing of the armistice closing the world-war, while the miasma of rhetoric still hangs heavily in the lowlands of sophomoric thinking, Mr. Bakeless, fresh from his military service, makes bold to assert that the fundamental causes of all modern wars (whatever collateral incidents may enter into play) and of the world-war as well are economic.<sup>1</sup> His work was conceived while he was still in the army, it was developed at Harvard, presented before the seminar in the Philosophy of History, read by a number of distinguished scholars, crowned by Williams College as a David A. Wells prize-essay, and printed for the Department of Political Science in that institution. If the Lusk Committee had jurisdiction in Massachusetts, the author would doubtless be listed between Miss Jane Addams and Mr. Charles Chaplin as a dangerous citizen.

Mr. Bakeless's volume, as may be imagined from its origin, is not the fruit of a lifetime of research. It is based mainly upon secondary authorities and does not go far beyond the documents available in English; but it is timely and well done. More than a third of the space is devoted to the causes of "the wars of the world" between 1878 and 1914, of which there were more than twenty, notwithstanding the heroic efforts of the Carnegie Foundation for Peace. Each one of these wars is taken up in detail and the economic elements carefully examined. The general conclusion is that

In all of the great wars, an economic problem can be seen as the fundamental cause which makes the conflict necessary, and though not always apparent to the peoples who are being led into war nor to the soldiers who fight it, it is usually clear enough to the statesmen whose negotiations break off as war begins.

Precisely so. Our author goes on:

It is equally apparent to anyone who closely scrutinizes not merely the record of political events and diplomatic interchanges, but the statistics which show the movements of emigration and immigration, the sources of food-supplies and raw materials, and the commercial reports which indicate the never-ceasing struggle for markets.

The world-war, of course, is no exception. Its fundamental causes may be classified thus: "Anglo-German trade-rivalry, Franco-German trade-rivalry, the *Drang nach Osten* and the Bagdad railway, Austrian and Italian economic ambitions." As for "*revanche*," "even this," says Mr. Bakeless, "was one part national sentiment to nine parts economics—principally the question of coal and iron." Precisely so. If anyone has any doubts about that let him read Féraasson's "*La Question du Fer*" which, with high contempt, brushes into the limbo of rubbish the ethnology of politics and the sentimentality of the referendum. If the human race is ever to get control of its destiny, it will be after it has become acquainted with the forces which prepare its fate. Mr. Bakeless has helped to clear the air. For that service a thousand thanks. If Mr. Wilson does not hurry up with his memoirs, his myth will have a harder struggle for survival than the mirage which Napoleon tried to create during his enforced leisure at St. Helena.

Mr. Clapham's book, "*The Economic Development of France and Germany*,"<sup>2</sup> is a different kind of enterprise, but it brings grist to the same mill. It is an academic, informative, and sober account of rural life in France and Germany, and the growth of industries, commerce, railways, finance, banking, and investments in those countries. There is no book like it and it fills a great gap in our historical literature. It conveys in systematic shape information that can be found in no other work, French, German, or English. Though little effort is made to connect the course of economic evolution with politics, Mr. Clapham's volume will be a healthy corrective for the divagations of the stock historians. It will come as a shock to those who have dawdled over the eccentricities of the July Monarchy, the wordy debates of 1848, the drolleries of the poor man's Emperor, and the bluster of the *Blut und Eisen* faction. Here is a straightforward account of what the French revolution did to land-tenure and the peasantry, of the growth of German iron and chemical industry between 1814 and 1914, the rise of French trade unions, and a score of topics scarcely touched upon in the accepted histories.

The way is thus cleared for a new history of Europe—one which disposes, in an introductory chapter, of the Congress of Vienna, the unity of Germany and Italy, the foreign policy of Palmerston, the "great" political reforms of 1832, '67, '84, and 1917, and fifty other minor matters of the same sort, and then tells us about the evolution of social life, industry, and thought in Europe, giving more to "coal and iron" than to Metternich, more to "finance" than to Disraeli and "the Faery," more to "trade unions and co-operation" than to the Hague conferences. Mr. Clapham has helped to prepare the public for such a history by carving out, ordering, and fashioning the economic materials. He has done this with an eye to detail and to large results. Though handling heavy materials he has not neglected form and style but has produced a book that can be read with ease by any who cares to know the facts. It should find its way into every college classroom where European history is taught, and perhaps it is not too much to hope that a few editors and stock-brokers may read it. Though dated 21 December, 1920, it does not betray the least sign of the herd-passions that were then racking the world.

CHARLES A. BEARD.

### THROUGH ANGLO-SAXON EYES.

Of these three volumes<sup>3</sup> the best is Mr. Harold Nicholson's study of Verlaine, and the worst is Mr. Stuart Henry's collection of belated gossip, while Miss Turquet-Milnes achieves an intermediate degree of badness peculiarly her own, as readers of her book on Baudelaire will have learned to expect. Mr. Nicholson, however, had an easy and delightful subject, and his ability to write is thrown into relief by the incapacity of the two other members of this trio. It is indeed, Mr. Nicholson's gentlemanly prose which carries the reader along, for, as he freely admits, he has nothing to relate of Verlaine which is not familiar to every one who cares for French literature. Mr. Nicholson has undertaken his task for the benefit of the uninitiated, for he ignores, and his publishers have apparently forgotten, that a book has been published by Mr. Wilfrid Thorley on Verlaine; a book, moreover, which appeared in England and America under the auspices of the publishers of the present work. It is a testimony to the shortness of their memory that they should have allowed Mr. Nicholson to assert that his is the first "Anglo-Saxon monograph" on Verlaine.

Modesty, however, is not the strong point of this Anglo-Saxon, in spite of his apologies for repeating in English what has long been familiar in the pages of Lépelletier and other French critics, for he does undertake to contribute a new chapter to the subject. This novelty

<sup>1</sup>"Paul Verlaine." Harold Nicholson. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

<sup>2</sup>"Some Modern French Writers." G. Turquet-Milnes. New York: Robert M. McBride Co.

<sup>3</sup>"French Essays and Profiles." Stuart Henry. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company.

<sup>1</sup>"The Economic Causes of Modern War," John Bakeless. New York: Moffat, Yard & Co.

<sup>2</sup>"The Economic Development of France and Germany." J. H. Clapham. England: Cambridge University Press.



appears when he comes to sum up "Verlaine's Literary Position." Naturally, Mr. Nicholson at once takes his stand upon that rock of English criticism, the belief that French poetry is inferior to English, that French is essentially the language of prose. Before buttressing up Matthew Arnold's old dictum with a learned discourse on metrics, with an analysis of Verlaine's metrical system borrowed from Mr. Ernest Delahaye, Mr. Nicholson proceeds to raise a barrage of wildly Anglo-Saxon generalizations. "Of all civilized races the French are perhaps the most gifted . . . but they have one basic defect: they have no sense of infinity." Shades of Pascal! "They have patriotism but no public spirit." Hence, no doubt, the innumerable funds for the assistance of struggling writers and artists, the collections of pictures bequeathed to the Louvre and the Luxembourg. "No other race would have left it to Belgium and Holland, and even to Mr. Arthur Symons, to discover Verlaine." Hear your virtuous countryman, O, Chatterton and Keats! Does Mr. Nicholson think that "no other race would have left it" to Mr. Wilfrid Meynell to discover Francis Thompson? An English biographer of Verlaine, addressing a public unacquainted with the facts, should be careful to differentiate between the attitude of the official and academic world and that of the younger generation of French critics—who then corresponded to Mr. Symons—who certainly did not wait for any outsider to tell them that a great poet was in their midst.

Having thus prepared the way, Mr. Nicholson gently insinuates that, as Verlaine is not monotonous, not a slave of the Alexandrine, not a conventional academic poet, he can not be properly appreciated by the French. They, it seems, are the only people who are conservative in literature, who resent innovations, and who worship traditions. Consequently, it is not hard to prove that, as Verlaine does not follow the behests of Boileau, as he had to face the hostility of the pundits, his countrymen do not really feel the music of his verse as the more enlightened Anglo-Saxons do. In his enthusiasm Mr. Nicholson actually annexes Mr. Stuart Merrill, who was born at Hempstead, Long Island, New York, and was educated in part at Columbia University, by declaring him an Englishman, and transferring his birthplace to Hampstead, London. This error, like the denial of Mr. Thorley's existence, may be due, of course, to Mr. Nicholson's ignorance of the literature of his subject. His allusions to contemporary French writers suggest innocence rather than malice aforethought. For example, he asserts that "with the exception of Claudel, Gide and perhaps Marcel Proust," French literature of to-day "is not yet of very great importance." Yet elsewhere Mr. Nicholson refers to the ineffable Jean Cocteau, surely the cheapest of charlatans, as if his dicta mattered.

The Claudel cult, of course, has its devotees in England, in spite of—or perhaps because of—the protests of Mr. Edmund Gosse, who does not take his opinions from the cenacle of the Claudelists in Paris, whose devotions are regarded with amazement by almost every independent critic in France. That is precisely the trap into which so many foreigners fall when they discuss a literature other than their own. They are disposed to be uncritical and to accept the judgments of supposedly competent critics abroad. In Paris, where log-rolling and puerile flattery are carried to a pitch undreamt of in London or New York, this method of forming an opinion is dangerous. It is the rule to salute one's colleagues in Paris as masters, and if the coteries denounce the old gang, they lose no time in starting their own special mutual-admiration societies. Inevitably the foreigner in search of what is new falls under the spell of such groups.

Miss Turquet-Milnes's volume, "Some Modern French Writers," is the work of a well-read student of contemporary French literature, but it is also a perfect example of this inability to form an independent judgment. Miss Turquet-Milnes discusses Barrès, Péguy, Bourget, Moréas, Claudel, Romain, Emile Clermont and Anatole France.

With the exception of the last, who has been dragged by main force into this gallery, these writers make a more or less homogeneous group, the generation of Catholicism and nationalism à outrance, with Barrès and Bourget as their prophets. The author describes her book as "a study in Bergsonism," and her thesis is that all these writers are the product of that fashionable philosopher's teaching. There is an element of soundness in this theory, for there is no doubt that under cover of Bergsonism a number of straying sheep were brought back into the fold of extreme patriotism and intellectual orthodoxy, so that the war appropriately came to test a generation which had, so to speak, been "asking for it." Miss Turquet-Milnes, I need hardly say, has not confined herself to that generation, but has taken its chief spokesman, Bourget and Barrès, as the reformed rakes of individualism, Claudel, Péguy and Clermont, as the sacrificial lambs of the religion of intuition and mysticism. But her insistence upon the Bergsonian element in that movement of reaction against the old tradition of scepticism and logic, the Voltairean France, has brought strange fish into her net, the strangest being the venerable Anatole himself.

In this fashion Miss Turquet-Milnes has pursued a fixed idea, which at once arouses suspicions and certainly recommends her book only to those who can strictly control her statements. This, unfortunately, is exceedingly difficult, for the turgid and nebulous style in which she writes is aggravated by the obscurities and vapours of the Bergsonian doctrine, now as dead as so many of the young men who imbibed it cheerfully in the years before the war. It is noteworthy that Julien Benda, who was the most alert of the anti-Bergsonian minority of *les jeunes*, although a collaborator with Péguy in "Les Cahiers de la Quinzaine," is only given one casual reference throughout this lengthy and otherwise well-documented work. For the rest, Miss Turquet-Milnes adopts the wholly uncritical attitude of the foreign critic who deems it safe to accept people at their own valuation. The only thing that is clear and fairly impartial is the bibliography, though the most elaborate section, on Bergson, gives neither of Julien Benda's books on the subject. An innovation useful to Péguy students and collectors is the complete list with dates and principal contents, of "Les Cahiers de la Quinzaine," which is not obtainable in any of the books hitherto published. From her list of these, by the way, the volume by Paul Seippel is missing, though he was one of Péguy's staunchest admirers. The bibliographies of Jules Romain and Barrès might as well have been omitted, for they are merely fragmentary.

Mr. Stuart Henry's "French Essays and Profiles" hardly belong to the category of serious literature. The longest essay is called "The Poetic Legacy of Leconte de Lisle," who, we are told, "partook freely of Hugo," but about whom the essayist has nothing to say that is not in the school manuals. Mr. Henry gives us his personal impressions of Jules Claretie, Coppée, the two Dumas, Loti, Lemaitre, Sardou, and other French figures of more or less importance. Hugo's granddaughter told him that Victor had the "English" habit of rising at dawn, pouring a pitcher of cold water down his back, swallowing a raw egg, drinking coffee and then working till breakfast-time at noon. Most of the lore gathered from contact with the great is of this illuminating character. What a time Mr. Henry must have had when he was in Paris!

ERNEST BOYD.

#### THE POETRY OF MR. E. A. ROBINSON.

OF his story "The Altar of the Dead," Henry James observed that it was on a theme which had been bothering him for years, but of which the artistic legitimacy was suspect; he had to write it, but he knew it to be pitched in a richly sentimental key which, under the hands of another, he might have condemned. His story, "The Turn of the Screw," surely one of the very finest ghost stories in any language, he frankly derided as a potboiler, making no reservations for its brilliance. He



was, of course, right in both of these opinions: he was a better judge of Henry James than any other critic has been, he knew his *parerga* when he saw them, he could afford to wave them blandly aside. We should think, perhaps, a little less of him, as we are tempted to do of any artist, if he had taken his *parerga* too seriously—if he had appeared to see only dimly, or not at all, any distinction between these things, which were carved from stones flawed at the outset, and those others, which no flaw rebukes.

Thus, towards Mr. Edwin Arlington Robinson, whom we are accustomed to think of as the most unflinching artist among our contemporary poets, one looks with the barest shade of suspicion after reading his latest book, "Avon's Harvest."<sup>1</sup> One has, of course, with the critic's habitual baseless arrogance, no hesitation in placing it—it fits, in Mr. Robinson's list, in so far as it fits at all, very much as "The Turn of the Screw" fits in the completed monument of Henry James. One is not disposed, that is, to take it with too great a seriousness. More precisely, the degree of our seriousness will depend on the degree of Mr. Robinson's seriousness; if we had any reason to suppose that Mr. Robinson regards "Avon's Harvest" as he regards "Merlin" or "Lancelot" or "The Man Against the Sky," then we should accept it with concern. For clearly it is not as good as these, and the most cursory inquiry into the reasons for its comparative unimportance will disclose its defects as not merely those of technique but, more gravely, those of material—as in the case of "The Altar of the Dead." We must grant, at this point, that to every artist come moments when he delights in abandoning for an interim the plane of high seriousness, to allow play to lesser and lighter motives: when Keats dons the "Cap and Bells," the critic, smiling, doffs robe and wig. This is both legitimate and desirable. By all means let the poet have his *scherzo*! We shall be the richer for it, we shall have, as audience, a scrap the more of the poet's singular soliloquy. But it is imperative that the poet, if his *scherzo* be abruptly introduced, and amid the graver echo of graver music, should accompany it with an appropriate twinkle of eye. Otherwise his audience may do him the dishonour of supposing that he has nothing more to say.

We prefer to believe, then, that Mr. Robinson does not himself intend "Avon's Harvest" as weightily as many of his other things. It is a ghost story, and a fairly good one. That Mr. Robinson should deal with an out-and-out ghost is not surprising, for ghosts have figured in his work from the very outset—ghosts, that is, as the symbols of human fears or loves, ghosts as the plausible and tangible personifications of those varieties of self-tyranny which nowadays we call psychotic. For this sort of ghost there need be no justification, no more than for the ghost of Banquo. If Mr. Robinson had been content with this, if his ghost in "Avon's Harvest" had been simply this—as it might well have been—we should have less cause to quarrel with him. As it is, we are bound to observe that he has *not* been content with this, that he has yielded to the temptation, which an unflinching realist would have resisted, of heightening the effect of the supernatural for its own sake. The knife, with which in a fulminous nightmare the ghost assails Avon, must later be re-introduced by Avon as a knife of ponderable enough reality, which the ghost, in evaporating, left behind. The actuality of the knife's presence there, after the admirable nightmare, might indeed have been explained by another mechanism than that of the supernatural; but no such explanation is hinted at, or, for that matter, can be hinted at, since Avon is himself the narrator. This is a grave defect; but a graver one is that which again calls to mind "The Altar of the Dead" as a fine thing made of flawed material—the psychological weakness with which the theme is conceived. If Mr. Robinson wished to give us, in Avon, a case of incipient insanity, with a pronounced persecutory mania, then he should have given us, for this aspect, a better lighting.

Either we should have been made, before Avon uttered the first word of his story, more dubious of the man's soundness of mind; or else there should have been, in the story itself, more light upon Avon's character as a thing easily shaken and destroyed—ready, in short, for the very insignificant provocation which was to turn out as sufficient to make a ruin of it. But we are assisted in neither of these ways, and in consequence the provocative action can not help striking us as disproportionately and incredibly slight: we accept it, as necessary to the story, very much as we often accept a ridiculous element in the plot of a photo-play—accept because acceptance conditions pleasure, not because we believe. We waive our incredulity for the moment; but it returns upon us at the end with the greater weight.

One wonders, in this light, whether it would be unjust, after our provisos for the artist's right to the *scherzo*, to see in "Avon's Harvest," as one often sees in an artist's less successful work, a clearer indication of Mr. Robinson's faults and virtues than might elsewhere be palpable. The poem is extravagantly characteristic of its author—there is perhaps no other poet, with the exception of Mr. Thomas Hardy, who so persistently and recognizably saturates every poem with his personality. We have again, as so many times before, the story told by the retrospective friend of the protagonist—apologetic, humorous, tartly sympathetic, maintaining from beginning to end a note about midway between the elegiac and the ironic. This is the angle of approach which has been made familiar to us in how many of the short ballad-like narratives of Mr. Robinson, of which the characteristics were almost as definite and mature in the first volume as in the last: "John Evereldown," "Richard Cory," "Luke Havergal," "Reuben Bright," in that volume, and after them a crowd of others; and then, with the same approach again, but in long form, "Captain Craig," and "Ben Jonson Entertains a Man from Stratford," and "Isaac and Archibald." What we see here, in short, is an instinctive and strong preference for that approach which will most enable the poet to adopt, towards his *persona*, an informal and colloquial tone, a tone which easily permits, even invites, that happy postulation of intimacy which at the very outset carries to the reader a conviction that the particular *persona* under dissection is a person seen and known. The note, we should keep in mind, is the ballad note—best when it is swiftest and most concise. If, as we observed above, the elegiac also figures, it is as a contrapuntal device (by "device" one does not mean to suggest, however, a thing deliberated upon), with a clear enough melodic line of its own. To narrative-speed much else is ruthlessly sacrificed. Should we admit also, in our effort to place this very individual note, an element suggestive of the rapid lyrical summary, cryptically explanatory, a little subdued and brooding, as under a giant shadow—of the choruses in the tragedies of Æschylus and Sophocles? In one respect Mr. Robinson's briefer narratives appear closer to these than to the English ballad—the action is so consistently a thing known rather than a thing seen. The action is indeed, in the vast majority of cases, an off-stage affair, the precise shape and speed of which we are permitted only to know in dark hints and sinister gleams.

The dark hint and sinister gleam have by many critics been considered the chief characteristics of this poet's style; and it is useful to keep them in mind as we consider, in a workshop-light, his technique and mode of thought. Technique, for our purpose, we can not regard as a mere matter of iambs and cæsuras; it is perhaps merely a more inquisitive term for "style," by which, again, I suppose we mean the explicit manifestation of an individual mode of thought. At all events, technique and mode of thought are inseparable, are two aspects of one thing, and it is impossible to discuss any artist's technique without being insensibly and inevitably led into a discussion of his mode of thought. Thus it is permissible, in the matter of the dark hint and the sinister gleam, to isolate them either as tricks of technique

<sup>1</sup> "Avon's Harvest." Edwin Arlington Robinson. New York: The Macmillan Company.



or as characteristics of a particular way of thinking: and it does not greatly matter which way we choose.

If we examine Mr. Robinson's early work, in "The Children of the Night" or "The Town Down the River," in search of the prototype of the "hint" and "gleam" which he has made—or found—so characteristic of himself, we discover them as already conspicuous enough. But it is interesting to observe that at this stage of his growth as an artist this characteristic revealed itself as a technical neatness more precisely than as a neatness of thought, and might thus have been considered as giving warning of a slow increase in subservience of thought to form. The "subtlety"—inevitable term in discussing the gleaming terseness of this style—was not infrequently to be suspected of speciousness. In "Atherton's Gambit," and in other poems, we can not help feeling that the gleam is rather one of manner than of matter: what we suspect is that a poet of immense technical dexterity, dexterity of a dry, laconic kind, is altering and directing his theme, even inviting it, to suit his convictions in regard to style. Shall we presume to term this padding? Padding of a sort it certainly is; but Mr. Robinson's padding was peculiar to himself, and it is remarkable that precisely out of this peculiar method of padding was to grow a most characteristic excellence of his mature manner. For this padding (the word is far too severe) took shape at the outset as the employment, when rhyme-pattern or stanza dictated, of the "vague phrase," the phrase which gave, to the idea conveyed, an odd and somewhat pleasing abstractness. Here began Mr. Robinson's preference, at such moments, for the Latin as against the English word, since the Latin, with its roots in a remoter tongue, and its original tactilism therefore less apparent, permits a larger and looser comprehensiveness; and for such English words as have, for us, the dimmest of contacts with sensory reality. However, it must be remarked that, for the most part, in the first three volumes, the terse "comprehensiveness" thus repeatedly indulged in was often more apparent than real: one suspects that behind the veil of dimness, thus again and again flourished before us by the engaging magician, there is comparatively little for analysis to fasten upon. The round and unctuous neatness of the poems in these volumes has about it just that superfluity which inevitably suggests the hollow. This is not to imply that there are not exceptions, and brilliant ones—"Isaac and Archibald" is a wholly satisfying piece of portraiture, and "Captain Craig" has surely its fine moments. But for the development of this characteristic into something definitely good one must turn to the volume called "The Man Against the Sky" and to the others that followed it. Here we see the employment of the "vague phrase" made, indeed, the keynote of the style—the "vague phrase," no longer specious, but genuinely suggestive, and accurately indicative of a background left dim not because the author is only dimly aware of it, but because dimness serves to make it seem the more gigantic. That, if true of the background, a strange, bare, stark world, flowerless, odourless, and colourless, perpetually under a threat of storm, is no less true of the protagonists. These, if their world is colourless, are themselves bodiless: we see them again and again as nothing on earth but haunted souls, stripped, as it were, of everything but one most characteristic gesture. If they are shadowy they seem larger for it, since what shadow they have is of the right shape to "lead" the eye; if their habiliments of flesh, gesture and facial expression are few, we see them the more clearly for it and remember them the better. This is the style at its best; but if we move on once more to the last volume, to "The Three Taverns" and "Avon's Harvest," even perhaps to some things in "Lancelot" (though here there are other inimical factors to be considered), we shall see a deterioration of this style, and in a way which, had we been intelligent, we might have expected. For here the "vague phrase" has become a habitual gesture, otiose precisely in proportion as it has become habitual. The "vague phrase" has lost its fine precision of vagueness, the background has lost

its reality in a dimness which is the dimness, too often, of the author's conception, and the one gesture of the protagonist is apt to be inconceivable and unconvincing. We savour here a barren technical neatness. The conjuror more than ever cultivates a fine air of mystery; but nothing answers the too-determined wand.

In connexion with this characteristic vague phrase, with its freight of hint and gleam, it is useful to notice, as an additional source of light, Mr. Robinson's vocabulary. We can not move in it for long without feeling that it indicates either a comparative poverty of "sensitivity" or something closely akin to it; either a lack of sensibility, in the tactile sense, or a fear of surrendering to it. We have already noted, in another guise, the lack of colour; we must note also the lack of sense of texture, sense of shape. As concerns his metre these lacks manifest themselves in a tendency to monotony of rhythm, to a "tumbling" sort of verse frequently out of key with the thought. It is an iron world that Mr. Robinson provides for us: if roses are offered they are singularly the abstractions of roses, not at all the sort of thing for the senses to grow drunk on. He gives us not things, but the ideas of things. We must be careful not to impute to him a total lack of sensory responsiveness, for, as we shall see in "The Man Against the Sky" and "Merlin," this element in his style reaches its proportional maximum and betrays a latent Mr. Robinson, a romanticist, who, if he uses colour sparingly, uses it with exquisite effect.

In general, however, Mr. Robinson's eye is rather that of the dramatist than of the poet—it is perceptive not so much of the beautiful as of significant actions; and the beautiful, when it figures here at all, figures merely as something appropriate to the action. In this regard he is more akin to Browning than any other modern poet has been, if we except Mr. Thomas Hardy. Like Browning, he is a comparative failure when he is an out-and-out playwright; but he is at his most characteristic best when he has, for his poetic framework, a "situation" to present, a situation out of which, from moment to moment, the specifically poetic may flower. This flowering, we are inclined to think, is more conspicuous and more fragrant in "The Man Against the Sky" and "Merlin" than elsewhere, most fragrant of all in "Merlin." Differences there are to be noted—"Ben Jonson Entertains a Man from Stratford" represents the perfection of Mr. Robinson's sense of scene and portraiture, sees and renders the actual, the human with extraordinary richness. In "Merlin," however, where Mr. Robinson's romantic *alter ego*, so long frustrated, at last speaks out, we can not for long doubt that he reaches his zenith as a poet. The sense of scene and portraiture, are as acute here, certainly, but the fine actuality with which they are rendered is, as in the best poetry, synonymous with the beautiful; and the poem, though long, is admirably, and beyond any other American narrative poem, sustained. The "vague phrase" here swims with colour, or yields to the precise; the irony (Mr. Robinson's habitual mode of "heightening," so characteristically by means of ornate understatement) is in tone elusively lyrical. Merlin and Vivien move before us exquisitely known and seen, as none of the people whom Tennyson took from Malory ever did. It is one of the finest love stories in English verse.

It is not easy to explain why Mr. Robinson should thus so superlatively succeed once, and not again. Shall we say that, if intellectually and ironically acute, he nevertheless lacks "energy"? There is no Chaucerian or Shakespearean breadth here; it is the closer and narrower view in which Mr. Robinson excels, and it may well be this, and the lack of energy (aspects of one thing?) which have in the main led him to a modern modification of the ballad-form, in which simplification and the "hint and gleam" may take the place of the richly extensive. These are not the virtues on which to build in long form: they are stumbling-blocks in a long narrative poem, since if they are allowed free rein they must render it fragmentary and episodic. These stumbling-blocks Mr.



Robinson amazingly surmounted in "Merlin," thanks largely, as we have said, to the fact that here at last a long-suppressed lyric romanticist found his opportunity for unintermittent beauty. But in "Lancelot," fine as much of it is, failure may be noted almost exactly in proportion as Mr. Robinson's theme has compelled him to "broaden" his narrative stream. Of the soliloquy he can be a master, and even, as in "Merlin," of the duet; but when the stage fills and the necessity is for a franker, larger, more robustious and changeable complex of action, as in "Lancelot," poetic energy fails him, he resorts to the factitious, and is often merely melodramatic or strained. We grant the nobility of theme, the austerity of treatment, and, of the latter half especially, the beauty. But the poem as a unit is not a success.

When we have considered "Merlin" and "The Man Against the Sky" it becomes unjust to consider again "The Three Taverns" or "Avon's Harvest." We feel a technical and temperamental slackening in these, a cyclic return to the comparatively illusory "depth" of the earlier work. They are *parerga* which we must hope do not indicate an end.

CONRAD AIKEN.

#### SHORTER NOTICES.

To the vast subject of Hindu art, the thirty-odd pages of Mr. Benoy Koomar Sarkar's little book offer a very fleeting "Introduction."<sup>1</sup> There are some interesting morsels of information and quotation in it, and one hopes that the author may be successful in his endeavour to show the parallelism of Eastern and Western aspiration. But, however modest may be Mr. Sarkar's claims for his essay, one can not but wish that it had been somewhat extended both as to the range and the consideration of the subject. When Mr. Sarkar asks "Who but a Christian can find inspiration in a 'Last Supper' or a 'Holy Family'?" meaning the paintings of these subjects by Western masters, the answer is too easy for those who know what deep appreciation of our classics there has always been among non-Christians and even non-Europeans. Similarly the pages entitled "Hindu Technique in Post-Impressionism" graze the subject so lightly that one may more properly speak of the author's touch than his grasp. Doubtless, however, the growing interest in Oriental thought will cause the brochure to be scanned by many who seek a point of approach to the great art of India.

W. E. P.

In her book, "The Story of the Woman's Party,"<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Inez Haynes Irwin is not only under the spell of the Alice Paul legend, she is its appointed and consecrated propagandist. Her history is a thoroughly official document, obviously approved by the highest authority in the Woman's party; and while it is also a spirited and amusing narrative, occasionally even a stirring one, it is, because of this very official character, curiously uninforming as to the real motive behind much of the party's activity and even of the nature of much of its work. A large part of the book is taken up with "human interest" stories of the leaders, Miss Paul in particular; stories sometimes consciously amusing, more frequently unconsciously so in their serious and gushing hero-worship. Yet Mrs. Irwin has written with a faith and enthusiasm that are at times infectious and she produces a good deal of evidence in support of her glowing picture. Of the pluck and humour and picturesqueness of many phases of the movement, of the political wisdom and determination of its directors there can be little doubt. Mrs. Irwin's faith, however, is entirely undisturbed and apparently even untouched by its equally evident opportunism, narrowness and snobbery, and the debasing tactics which resulted from its surrender to these qualities. She records without apparent misgiving the willingness of party-members to appeal to race-prejudice in the South and seems to see no incongruity in the "humiliation" experienced, and later deliberately exploited by the militant young "crusaders," in being sent to jail with coloured women. The acceptance and sanction of this attitude constitute a serious blemish on the book and on the movement, and make an unprejudiced reader wonder a little what Mrs. Irwin has in mind when she refers emotionally in her closing chapter to the "pan-Woman quality of the party."

M. G.

<sup>1</sup> "An Introduction to Hindu Art." Benoy Koomar Sarkar. New York: B. W. Huebsch, Inc.

<sup>2</sup> "The Story of the Woman's Party." Inez Haynes Irwin. New York: Boni and Liveright.

#### A REVIEWER'S NOTEBOOK.

IN 1889, when the English nation revealed through its press how unwilling it was to be "pried up to a higher level of manhood" by the "Connecticut Yankee," and was indeed denouncing the book as a vulgar travesty, Mark Twain tried to induce Andrew Lang to come to his defence. "The critic assumes, every time," he wrote, "that if a book doesn't meet the cultivated-class standard, it isn't valuable. The critic has actually impressed upon the world the superstition that a painting by Raphael is more valuable to the civilizations of the earth than is a chromo; and the august opera than the hurdy-gurdy and the villagers' singing society; and Homer than the little everybody's-poet whose rhymes are in all mouths to-day and will be in nobody's mouth next generation; and the Latin classics than Kipling's far-reaching bugle-note. . . . If a critic should start a religion it would not have any object but to convert angels; and they wouldn't need it. It is not that little minority who are already saved that are best worth trying to uplift, I should think, but the mighty mass of the uncultivated who are underneath." Whereupon our troubled humorist besought Andrew Lang to "adopt a rule recognizing the Belly and the Members, and formulate a standard whereby work done for them shall be judged."

It is recorded that Andrew Lang failed to respond to this remarkable appeal. He could scarcely indeed have understood it, knowing as he did so little about the American mind; for surely only an American could have dreamed of the possibility of a double standard of taste. How such a delusion came to possess Mark Twain would be an interesting study in itself. Partly, no doubt, it was because the American cultivated class of the last century was so limited in its culture that it notoriously failed to recognize works of genius, such as Whitman's, produced under its own eyes: because of this it was unable to establish itself as a court of appeal or to maintain any true standard at all. On the other hand, it was of the nature of our old democracy to believe that the feelings and opinions of the majority had a sort of divine sanction, the popular being regarded as *ipso facto* good. Under these conditions, a double standard of taste might well have seemed as natural to a man in Mark Twain's position as that other article of faith of the nineteenth century, the double standard of morals. Yet the "Connecticut Yankee" itself shows us how false the notion was. Mark Twain's plea was that he was "trying to uplift the mighty mass of the uncultivated." Actually, in this book, he debased them: he flattered their ignorance of history, he played on their prejudice against the old world, he drew their attention from the abuses of their own social life by focusing their indignation on the long-forgotten abuses of the Middle Ages, he confirmed them in their complacent belief that a shrewd, illiterate Yankee mechanic possesses all the secrets of life that anyone ought to desire. Mark Twain complained of "the critic"; here is the critic's retort.

It is with a number of such instances in mind that I have read Mr. Upton Sinclair's three recent novels, "King Coal," "Jimmie Higgins" and "100%: The Story of a Patriot." Judged by the "cultivated-class standard" these books are as bad as books can be; they are so weak, so slovenly, so deficient in all the qualities that go to make a work of art that, as one considers Mr. Sinclair's complaint of the boycott of the press, one asks oneself how far it is not due to the sheer worthlessness of this sort of writing. Novels are novels; from the standpoint of criticism their subject-matter can not save them. It is impossible to interest oneself in "winsome Irish lasses," in pretty stenographers whose "wicked little dimples lose no curtain calls," in "patriots" like Peter Gudge, in paragons like Jimmie Higgins; it is impossible because they do not exist in Mr. Sinclair's own imagination. They have no more existence than the villains and the heroes and the naughty ladies of the movies and the *Red Book Magazine*. Mr.



Sinclair has no more respect for psychology than his mine-owners have for their employees; he has no more respect for the intelligence of his readers than Mr. Hearst; he has just as much respect for the English language as the average newspaper-reporter. His novels are simply "reels" into which he contrives to pack all the sensations that have occurred in the United States during the last four years. To speak merely as a reader, merely from a literary point of view, one can not, with the best will in the world, follow these narratives from page to page.

I AM speaking, as I say, from the "cultivated-class" standpoint. And now the question arises whether Mr. Sinclair is any better advised in his attempt to liberate the proletariat by this means than was Mark Twain in "trying to uplift the mighty mass of the uncultivated." In his advertisement of "100%" Mr. Sinclair quotes the opinion of one of his readers that he will have even more trouble than he had with "The Brass Check"—"in getting the books printed fast enough." That was always Mark Twain's trouble, too; and for a similar reason. It is natural that Mr. Sinclair's books should be popular among the dispossessed: they who are so seldom flattered find in his pages a land of milk and honey. Here all the workers wear haloes of pure golden sunlight and all the capitalists have horns and tails; socialists with fashionable English wives invariably turn yellow at the appropriate moment, and rich men's sons are humbled in the dust, Irish lasses are always true, and wives never understand their husbands, and all the good people are martyred and all the patriots are vile. Mr. Sinclair says that the incidents in his books are based on fact and that his characters are studied from life. No doubt they are. But Mr. Sinclair, naturally enough, has seen what he wanted to see and studied what he wanted to study; and his particular simplification of the social scene is one that inevitably makes glad the heart of the victim of our barbarous system. It fills this victim with emotion, the emotions of hatred and of self-pity. Mr. Sinclair's novels sell by the hundred thousand: the wonder is they do not sell by the million.

BUT suppose now that one wishes to see the dispossessed rise in their might and really, in the name of justice, take possession of the world. Suppose one wishes to see the class-system abolished, along with all the other unhappy things that Mr. Sinclair writes about. That is Mr. Sinclair's own desire; and he honestly believes that in writing as he does he contributes to this happy consummation. I can not agree with him. In so far as Mr. Sinclair's books show us anything real they show us the utter helplessness, the utter benightedness, the ignorance, the *naïveté* of the American proletarian movement. Jimmie Higgins, as I have said, does not exist as a character. He is a symbol, however, and one can read reality into him. He is the American worker incarnate. Well, was there ever a worker so little the master of his fate? That, in point of fact, is just the conclusion Mr. Sinclair wishes us to draw! But why is he so helpless? Because, for all his goodness and his kindness and his courage, he is, from an intellectual and social point of view, unlike the English worker, and the German worker, and the French, and the Italian, and the Russian worker, an infant: he knows nothing about life or about human nature or about economics or about philosophy or even about his enemies. How can he possibly improve his condition, how can he set about advancing his own cause, how can he circumvent the wily patrioteers, how can he become anything but what he is, the mere football of every one who knows more than he? Let us drop the "cultivated-class" standpoint, for a moment, and judge Mr. Sinclair's novels from the standpoint of the proletariat itself. How do they appear now? They arouse the emotion of self-pity. Does that stimulate the worker or does it merely "console" him? They arouse the emotion of hatred. Does that teach him how to grapple with his oppressors or does it place him all the more at his oppressors' mercy? The most elementary knowledge of human nature tells us that there is only one answer to these questions.

THE American workers' movement is weak: that we know. The workers' movements of Europe are, in comparison, strong: that we also know. But why are they strong? Because the masses of individuals that compose them are, relatively speaking, not intellectual and moral infants but instructed, well-developed, self-conscious, self-respecting, resourceful men. They waste little energy in "hating" their masters; they are too busy learning to understand them. They waste still less energy in pitying themselves; they are too busy establishing their rights. How much of this superior *morale* they owe to their superior education, i. e., to literature, I shall not attempt to repeat; Mr. Max Eastman might contradict me again. But one thing is certain: nothing hinders the worker so much as books like Mr. Sinclair's. These false simplifications, these appeals to the martyr in human nature, these travesties of the psychology of the powerful ones of the earth are so much dust thrown in the eyes of the proletariat. To the workers themselves, in other words, Mr. Sinclair, with his cake and circuses, is more dangerous than all the Big Business men whom he chastises with whips and scorpions.

To return, then, to the "cultivated-class standard," I respectfully urge that a book which is not good enough for me is not good enough for Mr. Sinclair's readers either. I further maintain that the only writers who can possibly aid in the liberation of humanity are those whose sole responsibility is to themselves as artists. Consider the very best novels that have been written with a view to propaganda alone. Consider "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Mrs. Stowe undoubtedly helped to liberate the Negroes from slavery; but there would be few in our generation to deny that she "liberated" them from the frying-pan into the fire. She evoked the emotion of self-pity and the emotion of hatred, but she failed to make her readers think; and because of this, the last state of the Negro is all but worse than the first. On the other hand, consider Turgenev who, in his "Sportsman's Sketches," wrote to please himself alone. He revealed the serf not as an Uncle Tom, a bleary, teary wax image, but as a man like the rest of us, capable of pride, faith and thought; and the result was that the conscience of Russia has been occupied with nothing since but to rescue that same proud, faithful, thinking man and reinstate him in his rights. The wind bloweth where it listeth: no writer can tell *how* his work will serve. One can only say that if he does his work, and if he is sincere and has the talent, it can not help serving, and in the most unforeseen ways. Thus, for example, Gorky in his autobiography describes how he got his first revolutionary feeling from Dumas, of all writers in the world. As a boy he used to pore over Dumas's romances, and it astonished him to hear of a society in which people were polite to one another and considerate of one another. The streets of Paris became his Utopia, and it was then he began to dream of a day when his own Russia, the Russia of the disinherited, might also have its share of social grace and beauty. That was because Dumas, insincere as he was in other respects, conveyed a sincere picture of fine manners. "The persons," said Shelley (apropos of literature, and expressing the whole truth), "the persons in whom this power takes its abode may often, as far as regards many portions of their nature, have little correspondence with the spirit of good of which it is the minister. But although they may deny and abjure, they are yet compelled to serve that which is seated on the throne of their own soul. And whatever systems they may have professed by support, they actually advance the interests of Liberty."

THE REVIEWER recommends the following recent books to the notice of readers of the *Freeman*:

"The Fruits of Victory," by Norman Angell. New York: The Century Company.

"More Hunting Wasps," by J. Henri Fabre. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company.

"Rumanian Stories," translated by Lucy Byng. New York: John Lane Company.



## Orange-vendors and professors of history.

THERE is a prevailing notion that a paper calculated to meet the interests of a highly educated group must necessarily appeal only to the intellectually snobbish. Our experience with readers scattered over the face of the earth pleasantly refutes that fallacy, for the voluntary expressions which we constantly receive from FREEMAN admirers are evidence of the wide divergence in their social, financial, and mental stations.

Common sense and a capacity for assessing men and deeds, motives and achievements, are not the heritage of the comparatively few who have university degrees or who live on the interest of their fortunes or whom chance has elevated to high places. The uncompromising appeal to the common man evokes a trigger-like response that would astonish the cloistered scholar to whom learning is more than wisdom, and the youthful pundit to whom four university years represent the sum of human aspiration.

It is a tribute to matter and manner of the FREEMAN, we think, that it produces similar reactions from intelligent persons of widely varying cultural background. To wit:

CONCERNING AN ORANGE-VENDOR, AS RELATED  
BY A CALIFORNIA SUBSCRIBER

A couple of weeks ago a man came to my door, selling oranges in buckets. I buy of him every Monday. He happened through some remark I made to mention some topic on freedom.

I knew from his reply that he was on our side, so I told him of the *Freeman*, and was rash enough to loan him a marked copy. I mark them all and file them for reference. I shall never see this one again! But it aroused so much appreciation that he acknowledged to-day (presenting me meanwhile with a half-bucket of oranges as a peace offering for my loss), that even the "grandmother—who was washing dishes in the kitchen had to be called in to listen to the reading." Must have been advanced grandmother to have such son and son-in-law—or grandson!

They all found it such good reading that they mailed the copy to a friend in Colorado, who had just such sentiments and would be glad to know of such a paper. How could I object to losing my copy, under such comment?

The orange-man is an admirer of Mr. Debs—so I suggest you send him the number with the "Case of Eugene Debs." And I enclose fifteen cents to pay for my lost number of 6 July. I keep them all and wish to replace the one I loaned the orange-man.

FROM A PROFESSOR OF HISTORY IN AN  
EASTERN COLLEGE

After testing various organs of conservative, liberal, and radical opinion, I have come to the conclusion that the *Freeman* is by all odds the most perspicacious weekly in America. In exposing popular fallacies and in puncturing current assumptions, it has no equal. I wish that I possessed the means to place it in every home in the country. But it is not merely the stimulating quality of your thought that I find so enjoyable. It is your method of presentation. The irony, the humour, the literary allusiveness with which you fill your editorial columns week by week are a constant source of delight. As one issue succeeds another, I say to myself, "This is too good to last. No paper can maintain such a high level of workmanship and interest for long." Yet as the weeks go by, I find no deterioration in your output. On the contrary, the quality of it tends to improve. For clear thinking, searching criticism, and a finished style, one can always rely upon the *Freeman*. In the hope of extending your salutary influence and of making another acquainted with your disturbing views, I enclose a trial subscription slip.

Our friends—daily we discover them in unexpected places, frequently in the camps of conservatives—try to aid the FREEMAN by securing new subscribers, directing their efforts along lines of seemingly least resistance. They confine themselves to the avowed "intelligentsia," and the results, we admit, are successful. Let us offer a hint based on the orange-man's experience: try the meek and lowly. It will open new vistas to you. A common tie with many obscure persons to whom you have hitherto been indifferent will reveal itself. To discover a kindred spirit is more exciting than an aeroplane flight.

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